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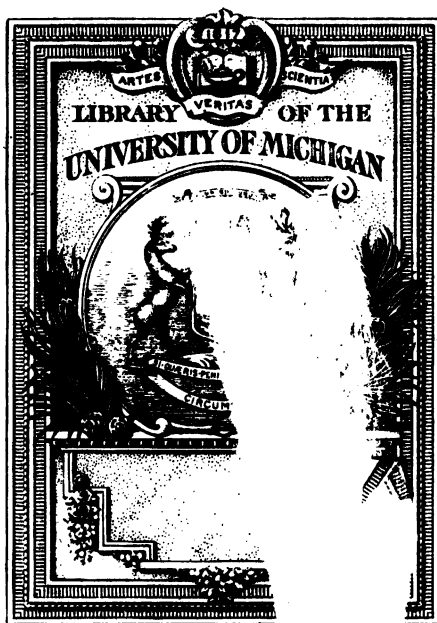
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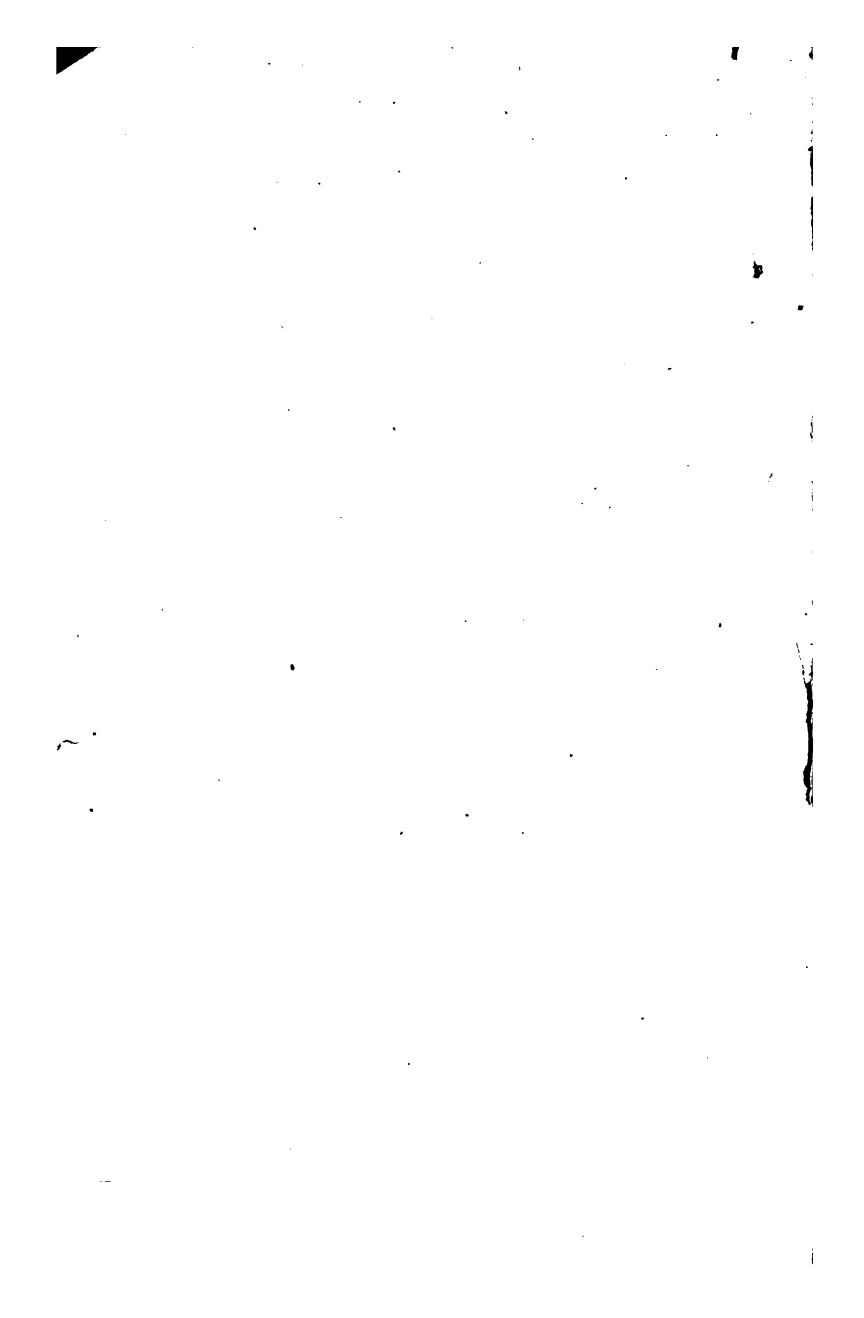
Robert G. Norman.

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A MEMOIR
OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS
OF
THOMAS DAY,

AUTHOR OF "SANDFORD AND MERTON."

BY JOHN BLACKMAN,

AUTHOR OF "FLOWERS AND FANCIES."

"Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise,
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild, yet unaverted eyes;
Liberal he was of soul and frank of heart,
And to his dearest friends, who loved him well,
Whatever he knew or felt he would impart."

SHELLEY.

London :

JOHN BEDFORD LENO, 56, DRURY LANE, W.C.

1862.

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TO

THOMAS MARTIN WHEELER

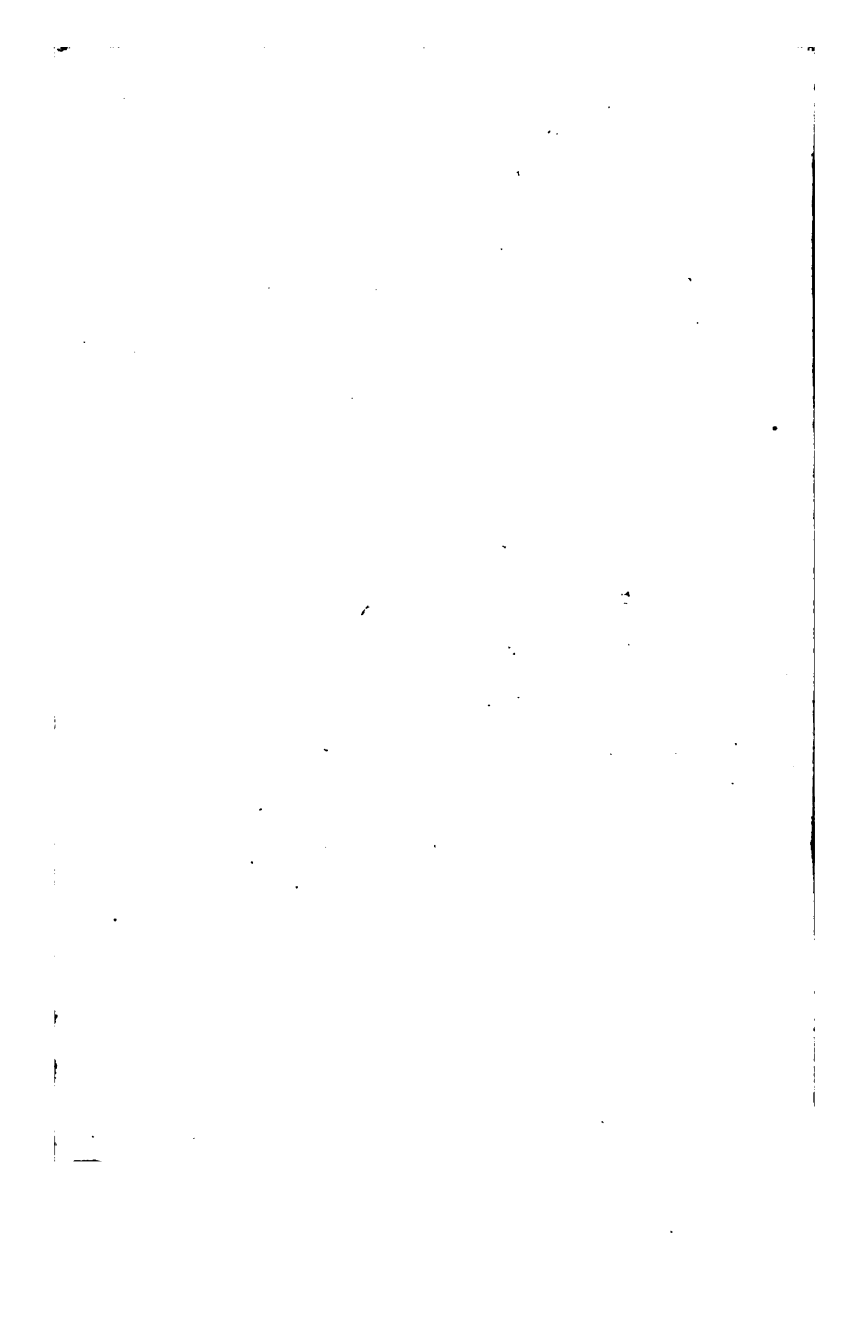
AND

GEORGE WILLIAM WHEELER,

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.



9-19-45
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INTRODUCTION.

ONE of the sunniest reminiscences of my early life is associated with the writings of THOMAS DAY. I had been toiling in the sunshine of a warm spring day, and, on returning through the fields from the quiet scene of my labour, I was met by an intelligent lady, who placed in my hands a small illustrated volume, saying, in her kindest manner, "Be a good boy and read this book." It was the "History of Sandford and Merton."

A remote country farm-house is not the most likely place in the world to find a library. This lady's injunction, therefore, was carefully obeyed; the book was read and re-read with increasing interest, and the impressions it then made upon my young mind have not even yet been effaced by the sweep of thirty years. Had this book been neglected and carelessly thrown aside, this humble sketch of its benevolent author would not have been written.

Most persons, especially those of the reading world, are more or less acquainted with "Sandford and Merton," a book which has long since passed the ordeal of criticism, and which still occupies a prominent position in the juvenile literature of this

country. Attempts have been made by over-active individuals to disfigure its beauties, and prune its native charms, so as to render it subservient to the fastidious taste of a class ; still the book lives on with its original freshness, firm as the enduring hills fraught with verdure and wild flowers, for it is enshrined in the heart of childhood and consecrated by its purest tears ; and yet, despite the long life of this book, how little is really known of its genial author, whose life-facts seem to have been overlooked amid the universality of his thoughts. Should the reader feel curious about these facts, he will turn in vain to his biographical dictionaries for the desired information. He may be told, probably, that DAY was an eccentric, but amiable man, and he learns but little more. One of the primary motives, therefore, which induced me to write this Memoir, is to shew that the world has made no mistake in affixing the word "eccentric" to the name and memory of DAY.

Though not what is usually termed "a popular man," THOMAS DAY was well known in political and literary circles both as a consistent reformer and classical scholar, while a select few esteemed him for his moral honesty, private worth, and religious candour. Even those who opposed his political sentiments and ridiculed his social dreams, admired his manliness and fearless avowal of opinions. That such a man lived apart from the outer world, amid

the shadows of his own speculative philosophy, will not appear strange, when the fact is considered that honest, out-spoken men are not always the "popular" favorites of their time, and we know how tardy justice is, even in our more discerning age, in crowning real merit with her favours. DAY courted not applause: he sought no distinctions; he was satisfied with the inner voice of an approving conscience; he lived chiefly with antiquity for the benefit of posterity, yet he neglected not the duties of the hour; his heart yearned for the general welfare of the community, especially the hard-working, suffering sons of the soil. He sympathized practically with the aspirations and hopes of the people; his soul was instinct with the life of freedom and poetry; the Southern slave and the unlettered English peasant attracted alike his genius and benevolence; he retired from the bustle of the great city into the bosom of Nature, that he might escape the contaminations of the crowd, and witness none of its demoralizing customs and crimes; he believed that a loftier and more unselfish condition of existence is possible, and that God created man to be happy; he lived in advance of his age, consequently his motives were generally misinterpreted and misunderstood. He was seldom found in the haunts of the wealthy, but was the constant friend of the needy; he preferred the untoward path of poverty—the path which Christ consecrated—to the evanes-

cent splendour of aristocratic show. Many a down-trodden spirit was gently led back from the yawning precipice of despair and death by his helping hand, many a clay-built cottage was made radiant and cheerful by the light of his countenance. Where weeds once flourished, roses waved in triumphant beauty, and industry carpeted the hitherto neglected hamlet with the luxuries of vegetation. Can we wonder that such a man should be called "eccentric?" All men who tower above the average mental and moral stature have their peculiarities. They tread beyond the beaten path of ordinary life; they stand out from the multitude. We do not expect to find a man of real genius bowing to the sordid sway of Mammon, to that selfish policy which extends no further than the current coin of the realm. Gold has a fascinating power, but the great soul can never become its slave. DAY's brief career was a conflict with social and political wrongs. His daily actions were in harmony with divine law, with the genuine spirit of Christianity, and, consequently, opposed to that outer semblance which is subversive of its true life. He could not succumb to the dogmas of custom and tradition, he obeyed rather the healthier dictates of his moral faculties, enjoyed the sunshine of the heavenly presence, and walked by the light of truth.

Another beautiful trait of his character was the deep love he cherished for children. He saw in

the glad, sunny face of childhood the reflex of a purer life. A joyous freedom plays about the sportive child, even the shadows that come across its dewy path are fleeting as the clouds of an April sky. It has been asserted by one who knew him* that Mr. *DAY was frequently recognized, and regarded with affectionate interest by the young, as the man who had written one of their prettiest story books.

Certain characters, such as he has described in his book, ridiculed his self-denying habits and plainness of dress, for he opposed the changing fashions with all the stern quaintness of GEORGE FOX. Young ladies, also, except those who lingered for the sake of idle curiosity, or for the richness and fluency of his conversation, turned from his presence with averted looks; clergymen, with a strong *penchant* for fox-hunting, gazed upon the strange man with solemn pity, and the worldly-wise left the unworldly author with subdued murmurings, and thus the affluent and gay passed, like the Priest and Levite, on the other side, whilst the author of "Sandford and Merton," heedless alike of smiles and frowns, shaped his own course, and toiled in his own independent way. Doubtless, he had errors, and overwrought views, engendered, probably, by his ardent love of truth, which the analytical reader may discover in the following simple story of his life.

* Dr. Beddoes.

CHAPTER I.

Wellclose Square—Birth and Parentage—Mrs. DAY's Courage and Piety—Stoke Newington—The Rector puzzled—School days—THOMAS PHILLIPS—The Charter House—Early Traits—A Battle and a Triumph—Corpus Christi College—RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH—ROUSSEAU—An Unaccepted Challenge.

WELLCLOSE SQUARE, in the immediate neighbourhood of the London and St. Katherine Docks, possesses few natural attractions. It is not graced with green trees and flowers, like some of our handsome West End squares and suburban terraces, it has no merchants' villas, nor ornamental waters, nor daisy-clad lawns, to greet the eye and gratify the taste. Even the beautiful sun appears to shine reluctantly upon the dingy house-tops. Nature, too, has entirely withdrawn her green fingers from the sides of the rugged houses, which stand gloomily in their solitariness like to property long in Chancery. Situated near the Thames, the Square is often enveloped in fogs, especially in the winter season; but the muses are not materialists, they weave charms around ruins and redeem remotest nooks.

Wellclose Square was much in the same dilapidated condition on that fine midsummer morning, the twenty-second day of June, 1748, when THOMAS DAY was born there, as it is in now. His father, who bore the same Christian name, was not a poor man, as might have been inferred from the *locale* of his son's birth, but was in comfortable circumstances.

He not only held a lucrative situation as collector outwards of the Customs in the Port of London, but possessed considerable property, also an estate in Berkshire, which, together, yielded a respectable income. His mother was JANE, the only daughter of SAMUEL BONHAM, Esq., a City merchant. She was a woman of excellent parts, of studious and domestic habits, and of singular fortitude. Her husband died suddenly in the month of July, 1749, in the prime of manhood; but being of a thrifty, persevering temperament, he bequeathed an ample provision for the future comfort and education of his only child. The unencumbered estate at Bear Hill, near to the sylvan village of Wargrave, with other property, produced about £1,200 a year, which enabled the widow to live in comparatively affluent circumstances. The education of her only child devolved entirely upon her. This onerous duty she performed with a mother's fondest care, which was repaid in after years by the lasting affection of her son. Many of those fine traits of character which distinguished the son may be traced to the early influences of the mother, who was equally remarkable for physical courage and steadiness of purpose. A trifling incident which occurred in her unmarried days will shew how fearless she could be in the hour of trial. In her eighteenth year she was walking with a female companion through a meadow, when a furious bull came running and bellowing

towards them. Her, friend, naturally enough, was alarmed, and began running towards the stile. She was, however, immediately prevented by Miss BONHAM, afterwards Mrs. DAY, who told her that, as she could not reach the stile in time to save herself from the furious animal, it was unwise to run, as she would thus be exposed to greater danger; for should she fall in her flight, she might be inevitably lost. She succeeded in persuading her friend to steal quietly towards the stile, while she herself attracted the bull's attention by standing between them. She looked at the animal with the firmest aspect she could assume, and, though not without some slight trepidation, fixed her eyes steadily upon his, and thus by her gaze she effectually checked his course. He, however, exhibited the strongest signs of indignation at being so controlled, and commenced roaring and tearing the sward with his feet and horns. While he was thus venting his rage upon the unoffending turf, she cautiously retreated step by step without removing her eyes from his. When he observed that she retreated he advanced till she stopped, when he again resumed his frantic play. Thus, by backward steps, she reached the stile in safety, and by a presence of mind rarely witnessed in one of her age and sex, saved the lives, probably, of herself and friend.

Her son inherited this robustness of character, and developed it to a greater degree. He has fre-

quently pictured in his writings that fortitude which he possessed, which yielded to no temptation, sank beneath no event, however discouraging, and that disinterested generosity which he was ever careful to exercise for the happiness of others, rather than waste his means exclusively for his own gratification.

Soon after the death of her husband, Mrs. DAY removed with her young charge to Stoke Newington Green, where for several years she occupied a small commodious house, and gathered around her a choice circle of intellectual friends. In this circle occasionally appeared the parish Rector, and here an incident occurred which may serve to illustrate the truth of WORDSWORTH's proverbial line—

The child is father of the man.

DAY could not have been more than five or six years old at this period. He was just beginning to read. It was his mother's usual custom to hear him in the evening, and explain different passages of sacred history. These invariably arrested his attention, particularly the books of the Hebrew bards and the picturesque Revelations of St. John. He would often ask for explanations which his mother was unable to give. One evening he was much puzzled about the meaning of one of those mysterious apocalyptic figures, and closely questioned his mother on the subject. She, to

evade the question, candidly said, "My dear, I do not know; but you may ask the Rector the next time he calls, he may be able to satisfy you." She did not suppose the child would think any more of the matter; but in this she was mistaken. A child's memory is generally faithful. Several weeks passed by ere the Minister called at the house. At length, in the company of several friends, he paid Mrs. DAY a visit, when, to the great surprise of every person present, the boy stepped forth into the middle of the room, and asked the Rector to explain the difficult passage. The good man was surprised and embarrassed at being thus interrogated by a child, and after a moment's hesitation replied, "My dear, that is allegorical." The answer mystified the subject, and rendered it still more perplexing to the young inquirer. "Allegorical, allegorical," said the boy, "I do not understand the word." The company smiled, and the Rector was silent, whereupon the boy, with a look of dissatisfaction, ran to his mother's side, and in a whisper loud enough to be heard all over the room, said, "Mother, the parson knows nothing about it."

Mrs. DAY was a woman of religious habits, and attended the parish church regularly. Her opinions on sacred subjects were vital and sincere, and these opinions she imparted to her son. Yet her piety was not of that exclusive nature which cannot per-

mit the Sunday walk. She sometimes, therefore, led her son through the refreshing fields, and expatiated on the beneficence of that Being whose "goodness is over all His works."

About the year 1755, a circumstance happened which ultimately separated mother and son, but not their affections. Mrs. DAY was a young widow in the heyday of womanhood, and possessed of considerable personal charms. She was not destined to remain long in her fortuitous solitude without apparently disinterested admirers, and among her friendly visitors at Stoke Newington was a poor gentleman named THOMAS PHILLIPS, who had also been a Custom-house officer. This man appeared to evince much sympathy with the young widow's unblest state, and, although Mrs. DAY was a woman of keen perception, who generally saw into the soul of things, she for once was subdued by appearances; but according to the old adage, "love is blind," and the widow DAY married this fortune-hunter. PHILLIPS, it would appear, was one of those unfortunate men who do not recognize the dignity of honest labour, who lack the spirit of manly independence, who are too proud to work, and too poor to live without it, yet who must eat. They scheme, therefore, rather than battle in the healthier field of toil. This man was polite, proud, and tyrannical. ANNA SEWARD says, "I have often heard Mr. DAY describe him (PHILLIPS) as one of those common

characters who seek to supply an inherent want of consequence by a busy, teasing interference in circumstances with which they have no real concern."

Although this man was comparatively penniless, we will not scorn his poverty. We are all subject to the vicissitudes of time and change. Some of the brightest ornaments of the human race have been poor. Poverty is often a blessing in disguise, and to the right-hearted it sometimes proves an incentive to noblest deeds.

PHILLIPS was not one of those high-souled men who seem born to triumph over circumstances. He had the glossy outside, but few of those genuine qualities of the head and heart which adorn our common humanity. He was one of those industrious idlers who are ever busy about other people's business. The sunshine of young DAY's life was clouded by the troublesome presence of this man, who, without any perceptible cause, conceived a violent dislike to the boy, and often treated him with unmerited severity. This conduct on the part of PHILLIPS towards DAY may have helped to engender that love of freedom and hatred of all tyranny, which were so strikingly exemplified in the life and writings of the latter.

As will readily be imagined, Bear Hill, to which place the family had now retired, henceforth was only the occasional home of DAY. His mother deemed it expedient, for their mutual comfort, that

he should be sent to some distant school, and accordingly he was placed in a respectable academy at Stoke Newington. While in this school he fell ill with the small pox, traces of which he bore through life. When sufficiently recovered to be removed, he went to his mother's home at Bear Hill.

The quietude and fresh air of Berkshire soon restored him to health, and he passed to the Charter House, where he spent the next eight years of his life, and made rapid progress in classical and general knowledge, under the once noted Dr. CRASSUS.

Here, also, he began to exhibit some of those peculiarities which strengthened with his years. He never mingled with his schoolfellows in frivolous amusements, nor wasted his pocket-money in unnecessary articles, but gave, so far as his slender means would allow, to the poor and distressed who came in his way. He kept a reserve fund for charitable purposes, and, as might be expected, he often gave to unworthy objects. He took no pleasure in wanton sports, such as give pain to animals. The genial-hearted Cowper would have numbered this young philanthropist on his "list of friends," for he would not "heedlessly, set foot upon a worm." In his periodical visits to Bear Hill, when rambling in the fields and lanes, he was averse to those pursuits and wanton acts of cruelty so common among boys of his age. He would gather a posy of wild flowers and enjoy the song of the lark, as she carolled

on her etherial way, but his sensitive spirit would not permit him to rob a poor bird's nest.

Although thus scrupulously careful not to injure the meanest of God's creatures, he deemed it necessary to cultivate the "art of self-defence," that art so peculiar to the English character. He was known at the Charter House as one of its best boxers, and, although his simplicity and good nature, which are usually associated with genius, were often imposed upon by more crafty boys, his courage and truthfulness were never doubted.

WILLIAM SEWARD, one of Dr. JOHNSON'S younger literary friends, was one of DAY'S school companions, and was fond of relating this characteristic anecdote:—A dispute had arisen out of some trifling matter between DAY and another lad of equal size and age, which, although DAY was not of a quarrelsome disposition, resulted in a stand up fight. The lads were well matched, and the juvenile spectators were all on the tiptoe of expectation. SEWARD was of the number. DAY soon discovered that his antagonist was unequal to the struggle, and, not liking to take advantage of a foe, who only maintained his position through excess of spirit and shame of defeat, stopped of his own accord, made his adversary an offer of reconciliation and friendship, shook hands and praised him for the bravery and courage he had displayed, thus relinquishing his own certain triumph to spare the shame

of another. Those of my readers who are acquainted with "Sandford and Merton" will remember a similar contest described between "Master Mash" and "Harry Sandford."

At the age of sixteen DAY was entered a gentleman commoner at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he remained three years, and, as he did not intend to advance himself in any learned profession, he left without taking a degree. Titles and distinctions were valueless in his estimation. Many of those traits of human goodness associated with the career of young Sandford were reflections from his own character and pictures from his own actual life. By his strictly moral conduct, and abstemious mode of living, for his drink consisted chiefly of the pure element, and he partook sparingly of animal food, he silently rebuked the vices and excesses of his fellow collegians, in fact, he indulged in nothing but books. He was particularly careful of time, which he regarded as a sacred gift, which, if licentiously squandered, cannot be recalled; he was also desirous of possessing a "sound mind in a healthy body," and consequently obeyed, to the best of his ability, those moral and physical laws which cannot be broken with impunity. One of his college friends states that "the main object of his academical pursuits was the discovery of moral truths, which he investigated with the severity of logical induction and the depths of metaphysical research. The result of

all his inquiries was that virtue is the true interest of man, and he therefore determined to pursue it as the most substantial good." Thus, in early life, he formed in his mind those principles of action from which he never swerved, and which he maintained in opposition to all the pleasures and allurements of youth.

It was in the year 1776 that DAY first became acquainted with RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH, a gentleman who achieved some literary fame in his time, but which has since been eclipsed by the genius of his illustrious daughter, MARIA EDGEWORTH, whose moral tales have instructed and delighted thousands of young persons, which attracted the favourable notice of Sir WALTER SCOTT, and may have stimulated him in the prosecution of those studies which have rendered his name immortal in the annals of picturesque romance.

EDGEWORTH married in his twentieth year, and was living with his young wife at Hare Hatch, near to the residence of DAY's mother. He was busying himself with a variety of scientific and philosophic schemes. He had seen ROUSSEAU, who was then in England, and was deeply imbued with that writer's system of education as portrayed in the story of "Emile." DAY was no less warm in his reverence for the writings of the eloquent sophist. The friends at length became equally opposed to those views. Prior to ROUSSEAU's visit to the historian,

HUME, in Derbyshire, he dwelt for a time at a solitary house, known as "Julians," on the borders of Bagshot Heath, where his disciples may have seen him.

EDGEWORTH, speaking of his friend DAY, says, "After our first meeting, scarcely a day passed while I lived at Hare Hatch without our spending several hours together; on literature of all sorts we conversed, but metaphysics in particular became the subject of our consideration; we differed frequently for months—nay, even for years, upon several points; but in time we came to the same conclusion. I never was acquainted with any man who in conversation reasoned so profoundly and so logically, or who stated his arguments with so much eloquence, as Mr. DAY."

About this period, DAY heard of a certain nobleman who had obtained notoriety for his wealth and depravity; he had caused the ruin of several young women among the peasantry, and had abandoned one of his unhappy victims to penury, which drove her to a life of misery in the streets. On hearing the intelligence, DAY's virtuous indignation was excited, and he wrote a letter to his lordship remonstrating with him on his heartless cruelty, and concluded by offering a personal challenge to a duel, unless he should relieve the victim of his meanness, and give her an opportunity of escaping from vice. As may be supposed, this letter remained unanswered and the challenge unaccepted.

CHAPTER II.

Wise Resolutions—Physic and Law—Life in the Middle Temple—Law Courts and Asylums—Sir William Jones—The Passing Cloud—The Spider—The Muses—Delia's Tomb—A Pedestrian tour—The Wye—The "Lady of the West"—Edgeworth-town—Love Effusions.

UPON leaving college, DAY resolved to devote his time and talents to the service of mankind, he was now comparatively free to pursue the course he had marked out for himself. Although but eighteen years of age, intense study made him appear full ten years older. He considered that most of the social and physical evils which the poor suffer are to be attributed to the false condition in which men are placed, and the defective laws by which they are governed. "How can I ameliorate the sorrows of my more unhappy countrymen?" was the question ever busy at his heart. He first thought of studying medicine, and of retiring into some working locality, where he might minister gratuitously to the physical necessities of the uneducated peasantry; he resolved, at the same time, to use his capital in agricultural pursuits, and thus aid the poor in a two-fold sense, by attending to the sick on the one hand, and by giving the opportunity of healthful employment on the other, and thus, by inculcating industrious and temperate habits, he anticipated a larger amount of domestic and social happiness. Again, he considered that an improved

system of legislation might remove many sources of human misery, and to make himself capable of the attempt he determined to study the law in preference to medicine, and in this resolve he was actuated by the most unselfish motives, simply that he might be able to defend the rights and liberties of man, and at some future time contribute to the advancement of the people by doing all in his power to disentangle the mystical thread of English law; he would then retire into some sylvan locality, and there, unmolested, develop his benevolent plans. He believed all professions unsustained by honest principles to be utterly worthless, and that true life is impossible without earnest, honourable, and systematic toil; he held the doctrine, "work is worship," which has since been widely disseminated by Carlyle and others.

In order to qualify himself for the furtherance of his cherished scheme, he entered upon the study of law, and passed three years in the Middle Temple. This profession, however, proved irksome, and ill-suited his romantic and singular disposition. He soon grew weary of a lawyer's office, and was often caught musing over some Greek poet, when he should have been studying some legal authority, he became disgusted, he said, "with the technicalities of law." He was ultimately called to the bar, but never practised.

He often gazed through his dingy office window

upon those grim stone walls on which JOHNSON, GOLDSMITH, BLACKSTONE, and other literary celebrities have gazed, and marvelled at the multiplicity of those internal commotions which must continually agitate the majority of mortals, in order to support and maintain such an expensive spectacle. Even London, however, has its redeeming features, and he would pass at eventide from the shadows of law-courts, to breathe a purer air and look with more complacency on scenes more in harmony with his own feelings. He found that while Englishmen possess temples for the benefit of lawyers and the preservation of musty records, while they have prisons and penitentiaries for the punishment and reformation of criminals, they have also institutions which reflect undying lustre on their character, and which in a great degree compensate for prevailing weaknesses and national follies. In his suburban walks he saw reformatories and asylums rising around him, illustrative of the truth of the Shaksperian aphorism—

England has a mighty heart,

and proving that our ancestors were no less generous than brave. These monuments of benevolence visibly reminded him of that most beautiful sentiment of Christian charity which he so loved to cherish. With the Cromwell-like roughness of our countrymen there mingles a vein of womanly ten-

derness, a practical sympathy for the widow and fatherless, a compassionate spirit, controlled by the genius of a lofty religion, which directs their willing hands to their side-pockets and assumes an immortal shape.

One of DAY's fellow students was Mr., afterwards Sir WILLIAM JONES, the renowned Oriental scholar, and with whom DAY did not always agree on political and religious topics; still a friendly feeling existed between them, arising, probably, from congenial tastes. Differences of opinion on minor matters did not materially interfere with their friendship. DAY's classical and historical studies had somewhat tinged his mind with scepticism towards some popular religious ideas, and he imbibed Deistical notions. These clouds, however, which have cast their shadows on half the thinking world, gradually cleared away, and his mind became dependent and serene. Some years after the friends had parted, DAY paid Sir WILLIAM a brief visit at his chambers, which gave rise to the following anecdote, and which will shew how sacred a thing life was to DAY, even in its most objectionable forms. Sir WILLIAM was in the act of removing a dusty volume from a shelf, when a large black spider was dislodged from its hiding-place, and fell to the floor. Sir WILLIAM cried hastily, "DAY, kill that spider, kill that spider." "No," said DAY, with that coolness for which he was so conspicuous, "I will not

kill that spider. I do not know that I have a right to kill it. Suppose, when you are going in your coach to Westminster Hall, a superior being, who, perhaps, may have as much power over you as you have over that spider, should say to his companion, 'Kill that lawyer, kill that lawyer;' how should you like that, JONES? And I am sure, to most people, a lawyer is a more noxious animal than a spider."

DAY, like his friend, JONES, occasionally indulged in verse-making, and both have left creditable evidences of their skill in this art. DAY became a votary of the muses at a very early age, and, like all similarly constituted minds, was an ardent lover of Nature. In the intervals of his scholastic and legal studies he often caught glimpses of the beautiful, and clothed his impressions in verse.

Surrounded, as we sometimes are, by shadows of the outer world, which are apt to exercise a gloomy influence over the soul, it must ever be a joyous sight to witness the many-hued rainbow athwart the heavens, and the cheerful sunlight streaming over the receding clouds. No less beautiful are those refreshing rays of poesy which sometimes light up the intellectual horizon of the young mind, and disperse the clouds of sadness. Poetry is everywhere, and especially is it about the footsteps of youth. It is interesting to witness the spring-tide of genius, its earliest unfoldings, and vernal blossoms, and to

watch its progress until it summers down into the stern realities of life. Who loves not the tender beauties of the unfolding year, the sweetbriar, snow-drops, and golden sheets of crocuses, the sparkling woodland glade, and the long cloud-shadows sailing over the fresh green grass, where the young lambs bleat, and who can listen with indifference to the musical utterances of fanciful thought, as the dawning mind expatiates on the new world, as on a land of fairy enchantment, strewing its pleasure-path with Elysian flowers? Alas! for that man who prefers the sordid rule of Mammon to the freedom and poetry of flushed life, to the radiance of that loving spirit which robes creation with ever-renewing splendour, which is the brightness of the flower and the star.

The following lines are among the earliest effusions of DAY. They were written in 1776, and addressed to a young lady, whose sympathy had been awakened by the misfortunes and early death of a friend. They need no comment—they tell their own sad story. The lines are addressed to “the authoress of ‘Verses,’ to be inscribed on Delia’s Tomb.”

Sweet Poetess, whose gentle numbers flow
With all the artless energy of woe!
The choicest wreath, oh, lovely maid! be thine,
Which pity offers at the Muse’s shrine.
Were there a strain of pow’r to soothe the care
Of bitterest anguish, and assuage despair

Thy generous verse might every bosom cheer,
 And wipe from every eye the falling tear
 But there are transports of the secret soul,
 Which not the Muse's sacred charms control :
 When ruined innocence condemned to bleed,
 Mourns the remembrance of the fatal deed ;
 While stern contempt attends, and public hate,
 And shame remorseless points the dart of fate ;
 Yet shall thy votive wreath unfading bloom,
 A grateful offering to thy Delia's tomb.
 There, while celestial mercy beams confest,
 And soothes the mourner to eternal rest,
 Be fancy's mildest, softest, visions seen,
 And forms arial glitter o'er the green,
 Such forms as oft, by bower and haunted stream,
 Descend mysterious on the poet's dream !
 There, borne by hovering zephyrs through the air,
 Returning Spring shall wave her dewy hair ;
 While Flora, mistress of the milder year,
 Marks every flower she scatters with a tear.
 There, when the gloom of midnight stills the plains,
 The sacred guardians of immortal strains
 To every blast shall bid their tresses flow,
 And pour the sweet majestic sounds of woe !
 Lives there a virgin in the secret shade,
 Not yet to shame by perjured man betrayed ?
 This sacred spot instructed let her tread
 And bend in silent anguish o'er the dead !
 She, once like thee, to hope's gay vision born,
 Shone, like the lustre of the glorious morn ;
 One hour of guilt, one fatal hour is o'er,
 Lo, youth, and hope, and beauty are no more
 Go, now in mirth the fleeting hours employ
 Go, snatch the flowers of transitory joy,

Let feast and revelry prolong the night,
 The lyre transport thee, and the dance delight ;
 Yet be one pause of sad reflection given
 To the low voice of Delia, and of Heaven !
 That voice which rises from her dreary tomb,
 And calls thee to its solitary doom,
 Dims every taper, palls the mantling wine,
 And blasts the wreath which love and pleasure twine !
 And thou, oh, youth ! whom meditation leads
 With pensive step, along these glistening meads,
 If yet thy bosom, unseduced and pure,
 Ne'er worshipped fortune's shrine or pleasure's lure ;
 If at the tale of innocence opprest,
 Strong indignation struggle in thy breast,
 If in thy constant soul soft pity glow,
 And foes to virtue be thy only foe,
 Approach this spot, and mark with pitying eyes,
 How low the young, the fair, the gentle lies :
 Be the stern virtue of thy soul resigned,
 Let gushing tears attest thy yielding mind !
 Swear by the dread avengers of the tomb,
 By all thy hopes, by Death's tremendous gloom,
 That ne'er by thee deceived, the tender maid,
 Shall mourn her easy confidence betrayed ;
 Nor weep in secret thy triumphant art,
 With bitter anguish rankling in her heart.
 So may each blessing, which impartial fate
 Showers on the good, but snatches from the great,
 Adorn thy favoured course with rays divine,
 And Heaven's best gift, a virtuous love be thine !

On coming of age, DAY became the master of his ample fortune, and, as his mother's home was rendered comfortless by the despotic character of his

stepfather, he considered it his duty to look out for a suitable partner and make a home of his own. He also resolved upon a tour through the western counties of England, for the twofold purpose of finding a suitable partner, and acquainting himself with the habits and wants of the people. He accordingly started on his travels by way of Oxford, with knapsack and staff, conversing with peasants, miners, artisans, and operatives of different orders, carefully noting the particulars of his travels and talk. Unfortunately, this record of his wanderings shared the fate of his letters; it was not preserved, or it would have given many interesting particulars, and added greatly to his biography. This tour was chiefly confined to the West of England and some parts of South and North Wales. He was fond of mixing with farmers on market days in the towns through which he passed. He possessed a fund of animal spirits, and a ready vein of wit and humour, which always made his company acceptable. The rich scenery of the west, the hoar castles, the picturesque banks of the beautiful Wye, and the green mountains of Wales, delighted him exceedingly and gave pleasurable zest to his pilgrimage. He next passed over to Ireland, and spent a few weeks with his friend Edgeworth, who was then living on the family estate at Edgeworthstown, and where some of his descendants still reside.

At a friend's house, near Shaftesbury, DAY met a young lady whose cultivated mind and personal charms attracted his attention, and, although she did not answer to the wife of his views, he found himself enchained by her beauty, and wrote these verses, which seem to commemorate the first event of this kind in his rambles, and appear rather to describe the sacrifice he expected the lady to make for his sake, than to display the warmth of a wounded heart.

THE LADY OF THE WEST.

From every rich and gaudy scene,
Which crowded capitols display,
I court the solitary green,
Or o'er the pathless mountains stray.
From vice, from folly, pomp, and noise,
On Reason's wings I fly;
All hail, ye long expected joys
Of calm tranquility.
At least in this obscure retreat,
Unvisited by kings,
Has Virtue fix'd her halcyon seat,
And Freedom waves her wings.
O, gentle Lady of the West,
Whose charms on this sequestered shore
With love can fire a stranger's breast,
A breast that never loved before.
O, tell me, in what silent vale,
To hail the balmy breath of May.
Thy tresses floating on the gale,
All, simply neat, thou deign'st to stray.

Not such thy look, not such thy air,
 Not such thy unaffected grace ;
 As 'mid the town's deceitful glare,
 Marks the proud nymph's disdainful face.

Health's rosy bloom upon thy cheek,
 Eyes that with artless lustre roll
 More eloquent than words can speak
 The genuine feelings of the soul.

Such be thy form ! thy noble mind
 By no false culture led astray ;
 By native sense alone refined
 In Reason's plain and simple way.

Indifferent if the eye of Fame
 Thy merit unobserving see ;
 And heedless of the praise or blame
 Of all mankind, of all but me.

O, gentle Lady of the West,
 To find thee be my only task ;
 When found, I'll clasp thee to my breast,
 No haughty birth or dower I ask.

Sequester'd in some secret glade,
 With thee unnoticed would I live ;
 And if content adorn the shade,
 What more can Heaven or Nature give ?

Too long deceived by Pomp's false glare,
 'Tis thou must sooth my soul to rest ;
 'Tis thou must soften every care,
 O, gentle Lady of the West !

The "Lady of the West" made no satisfactory response to his terms, she did not care to retire into "some secret glade" to live unnoticed ; he resolved that the woman of his choice should be as eccentric

as himself, that she should have a taste for "literature and science, for moral and patriotic philosophy ;" that she should regard the external forms of fashionable life with supreme contempt, that she should live apart from custom in some far off retirement, and take pleasure in "feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and in alleviating the distresses of the most wretched and most miserable among mankind ; that in her dress and diet she should be as simple as a mountain girl, fearless and intrepid, as the Spartan wives and Roman heroines." How could he expect to find such a creature ready made to his hands, among the fair daughters of Eve ? Even in love matters, DAY had recourse to none of that flattery through which sometimes spring the flowers of truth. The following fanciful Elegy is perhaps the richest of DAY's love effusions :—

Yet once again, in yonder myrtle bowers,
 Whence rose-lipped zephyrs, hovering, shed perfume,
 I weave the painted radiance of the flowers,
 And press coy Nature in her days of bloom.
 Shall she, benignant, to the wondering eyes
 Of the lone hermit all her charms unfold ?
 Or, gemm'd with dew, bid her gay florets rise
 To grace the rustic master of the fold ?
 Shall *these* possess her bright, her fragrant store,
These snatch the wreath, by plastic Nature wove,
 Nor wanton Summer yield one garland more
 To grace the bosom of the nymph I love ?

For she shall come ; with her each sister grace,
 With her the kindred powers of harmony,
 The deep recesses of the grove shall trace,
 And hang with flowers each consecrated tree.
 Blithe Fancy too shall spread her glittering plumes,
 She loves the white cliffs of Britannia's isle,
 She loves the spot where infant Genius blooms,
 She loves the spot, where Peace and Freedom smile.
 Unless her aid the mimic queen bestow,
 In vain fresh garlands the low vales adorn ;
 In vain with brighter tints the florets glow,
 Or dewdrops sparkle on the brow of morn.
 Ope not one blossom to the spicy gale,
 Throws not one elm its moss-wreathed branches wide,
 Wanders no rill through the luxuriant vale,
 Or, glist'ning, rushes down the mountain side.
 But thither, with the morning's earliest ray,
 Fancy has winged her ever-mazy flight,
 To hymn wild carols to returning day,
 And catch the fairest beams of orient light.
 Proud of the theft, she mounts her lucid car,
 Her car the rainbow's painted arch supplies ;
 Her swift-winged steeds unnumbered loves prepare,
 And countless zephyrs waft her through the skies.
 There, while her bright wheels pause in cloudless air,
 She waves the magic sceptre of command,
 And all her flattering visions, wild as fair,
 Start into life beneath the potent wand.
 Here, proudly nodding o'er the vale below,
 High rocks of pearl reflect the morning ray,
 Whence gushing streams of azure nectar flow,
 And tinge the trickling herbage on their way.

There, culled from every mountain, every plain,
 Perennial flowers the ambient air perfume,
 Far off stern Boreas holds his drear domain,
 Nor chains the streams, nor blights the sacred bloom.

Through all the year, in copse and tangled dale,
 Lone Philcmel her song to Venus pours,
 What time pale Evening spreads the dewy veil,
 What time the red Morn blushes on the shores.

Illusive visions ! O, not here,—not here,
 Does Spring eternal hold her placid reign,
 Already Boreas chills the altering year,
 And blasts the purple daughters of the plain.

So fade my promised joys ! fair scenes of bliss,
 Ideal scenes, too long believed in vain,
 Plunged down and swallowed deep in Time's abyss !
 So veering Chance, and ruthless fates ordain.

Thee, Laura, thee, by fount, or mazy stream,
 Or thickest rude, unpressed by human feet,
 I sigh, unheeded, to the morn's pale beam ;
 Thee, Laura, thee, the echoing hills repeat.

Oh ! long of billows wild, and winds the sport,
 Seize, seize, the safe asylum that remains !
 Here, Truth, Love, Freedom, Innocence resort,
 And offer long oblivion to thy pains.

When panting, gasping, breathless on the strand,
 The shipwrecked mariner reclines his breast,
 Say, shall he scorn the hospitable hand,
 That points to safety, liberty, and rest.

But thou, too soon forgetful of past woe,
 Again would'st tempt the winds, and treachrous sea ;
 Ah ! shall the raging blast forget to blow,
 Shall every wintry storm be hushed for thee ?

Not so ! I dread the elemental war,
Too soon, too soon, the calm, deceitful, flies ;
I heard the blast come whistling from afar,
I see the tempest gathering in the skies.
Yet let the tempest roar ! love scorns all harms,
I plunge amid the storm, resolved to save ;
This hour, at least, I clasp thee in my arms,
The *next* let ruin join us in the grave.

These stanzas were addressed to a sister of LOVELL EDGEWORTH, who, in his "Memoirs" says, " Mr. DAY and my sister soon discovered, what all their friends had seen from the beginning of their acquaintance, that they were not suited to each other. Fortunately this discovery was made before my friend had become so far attached, as to render my sister's final decision a source of deep, or at least of permanent regret."

CHAPTER III.

The History of Little Jack and its Moral—Dealing with Enemies—Songs of Freedom—The Devoted Legions—The Desolation of America—John Bicknell—The Dying Negro—Poetical Extracts.

DAY now began to despair of finding such a partner as his strange fancy had pictured, and he turned his thoughts to more prosy matters. He wrote and published anonymously a book for youth, "The History of Little Jack," which was tolerably successful and has since been translated into several languages. It is the story of a foundling who was picked up by an honest old man who lived alone on a wild moorland in the North of England. The old man, who had been a soldier, brought the lad up, and told him warlike stories. At length he dies and, with his blessing, gives the boy this advice: "As soon as I am dead, you must go to the next village and inform the people that they may come and bury me; you must then endeavour to get into service, and work for your living, and if you are strictly honest and sober, I do not doubt that you will find a livelihood, and that God, who is the common Father of us all, will protect and bless you. Adieu, my child, I grow fainter and fainter. Never forget your poor old daddy, nor the example he has set you; but in every situation of life, discharge your duty, and live like a soldier and a

Christian." Little Jack then starts forth into the wide world to seek for a livelihood, becomes a soldier, and afterwards a sailor, meets with many adventures by sea and land, and at length makes a fortune among the Tartar tribes, returns to his native land, and settles down comfortably on the skirts of the moor, proving the moral of the story, "that it is of little consequence how a man comes into the world, provided he behaves well and discharges his duty when he is in it."

Amid the vagaries and imaginings of DAY the nobility of his nature shone conspicuously, and, although, like one of old "he went about doing good," he found many enemies and had the most Christian way of conquering them. He never returned evil for evil, but waited for an opportunity of doing them a kindness. The case of PHILLIPS is only one instance of his mode of dealing with his enemies, and exhibits his character in a most endearing light. On taking possession of his property, his mother's income became somewhat straitened and she was greatly dependent on the generosity of her son; but such a son could not easily forget the woman who had so tenderly watched over his helpless years and guided the footsteps of his youth. He allowed her three hundred pounds a year; yet he often found her apparently unhappy and sometimes in tears. On inquiring for the cause of her sorrow, he learnt that it arose out of her solicitude for the future

welfare of her husband, for, should she die first, PHILLIPS would be left in a state of comparative want, he having no property of his own. Upon learning this, DAY immediately augmented his mother's income to four hundred a year, and settled the same on her and her husband for life. Thus did he repay the tyrant of his youth—the man who had embittered his earliest years.*

DAY still played with the Muses, and passed from lays of love, to songs of freedom. He wrote an address to liberty, which contains some bold and stirring lines. Prefixed to this poem are those well-known lines from Otway's "Venice Preserved."

a most notorious villian,
To see the sufferings of my fellow creatures,
And own myself a man ; to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a shew
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.

His next poetical production was "The Devoted Legions," founded on the old Roman story of the avaricious CRASSUS who made war against the Parthians, despite the prayers of his people, and who was ultimately put to death by his infuriated soldiers, whose clamour for peace he obstinately resisted. Here is a brief extract which will show its character:—

* Thomas Phillips died at Bear Hill, in the autumn of 1782.

Now, chiefs ! pursue the purpose of thy hate !
 Lead those devoted legions to their fate !
 Though swifter than the wind thy eagles fly,
 The Parthian shaft shall reach them in the sky.
 Here stand the limits of the Roman pride,
 And heaven and hell roll back the swelling tide,
 Thus hurling flames on yonder ghastly bands,
 I blast their courage, and disarm their hands.
 While every javelin by a foe impressed
 Shall stamp its vengeance on a Roman breast.
 What are thy troops ? a weak and servile train,
 Allured to deeds of death by sordid gain,
 Their country's shame—the pamper'd city's lees,
 Unnerved by indolence and vile disease,
 Whom neither honour warms, nor peace and freedom please,
 Sworn slaves of lawless power, and foe to right,
 Thy dark assassin rushes to the fight :
 Nor love, nor shame, his hardened bosom knows,
 No tender sympathy for human woes ;
 But nursed in foreign war or civil strife,
 Stranger to all the ties that sweeten life,
 As chance directs, a guilty sword he draws
 For every leader and for every cause.
 Hopes thy fond soul with bands like these to tame
 The Parthian warrior's fierce and God-like flame ?
 In native liberty secure, he fears
 Nor thy bright falchions, nor thy barbèd spears.
 He spurs his courser, swifter than the wind,
 And leaves the terrors of thy war behind ;
 Then rushes to the fight with shifted reins,
 And half thy boasted legions strew the plains.

The " Devoted Legions " was followed by another poem, written in a similar spirit and style, condem-

natory of the American war, and entitled "The Desolation of America." This poem was addressed to Lord GEORGE GERMAINE, then Secretary of State, and who directed the military operations against America. This poem, however, proved but a political dream which is never likely to be realized. Perhaps no man ever loved his country more, or, was more perfectly English in the truest sense of the term, than was DAY, yet his attachment to his country was not of that selfish kind which could excuse or palliate injustice to other nations under pretence of national interest. He was more attached to true liberty than to his native soil, and he expressed this sentiment in the following lines, where he describes the sensations of the first colonists who fled from the cultivated plains of England to take refuge in the woods of America :—

The favoured clime, the soft domestic air,
And wealth and ease, were all below their care,
Since there a hated tyrant met their eyes,
And blasted every blessing of the skies.
For not the winding stream, or painted vale,
The sweets of summer, or the vernal gale,
Were formed to fetter down the noble soul,
Beneath the magic of their soft control.
Wherever Nature bids her treasures rise,
Or circling planets rush along the skies,
Or ocean rolls his ever-ebbing wave,
His fate ordained a refuge for the brave,
Who claims from Heaven, and Heaven allows the claim,
To live with Freedom, or to die with Fame,

And finds alike, contented with his doom,
In every clime a country or a tomb.

The chief topic which this poem was designed to illustrate, was the attempt to subjugate America by burning her towns and villages, and by desolating her coasts, contrary to the laws of war, as well as humanity. The poet relates the lamentation of an aged American, who, with his wife and daughter, had escaped by flight from one of these tragedies, and had arrived, breathless, at the edge of a deep wood, where they found a safe retreat from the enemy. There the mother laments their misfortune in a most pathetic manner, and, afterward, the aged father rises, and while deploring the misery of his unhappy countrymen, he execrates all attempts to enslave them, and every idea of submission. He hopes for a happy termination of the war by the establishment of true liberty in America, and closes his speech with the following apostrophe to his distressed country :—

How long, O storm-tossed vessel ! wilt thou ride
The sport of winds and victim of the tide ?
While all the elements thy wreck conspire,
The seas in tempest and the skies on fire.
Yet let the lightning's flash, the billow's whirl,
Be firm, Great Pilot, nor desert the helm !
See where a beam of everlasting light,
The gloom dispersing, rises on thy sight,
Promise of safety, harbinger of bliss,
To guide the wandering on the vast abyss.

O then, unmoved, the mighty danger wait,
 Nor sink below the measure of thy fate !
 Though from each quarter, gathering tempests rise,
 Though whirlwinds rock the earth and tear the skies,
 Let neither doubt impede, nor fears transport,
 These are the gales that waft thee to thy port.

The crowning work of DAY's poetical genius was, undoubtedly, "The Dying Negro;" but that has shared the fate of his other poems. The author had a friend a few years older than himself, whose name was JOHN BICKNELL. They had been students together in the Temple. This young man sent DAY the following sketch, with a few lines on the subject, and suggested the poem. "A negro, belonging to the captain of a West Indiaman, having agreed to marry a white woman, his fellow servant, in order to effect his purpose, had left his master's house, and procured himself to be baptised; but being detected and taken, he was sent on board the captain's vessel, then lying in the river, when finding no chance of escaping, and preferring death to another voyage to America, he took an opportunity of stabbing himself." As soon as his determination is fixed, he is supposed to write the epistle to his intended wife.

This poem passed through several editions, and attracted considerable attention to the subject of slavery. The third edition he dedicated to JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU in striking and eloquent lan-

guage. DAY sympathized with ROUSSEAU's love of freedom, and educational views, but not with his moral infirmities. Although "The Dying Negro" was projected and some lines written by BICKNELL, the poem virtually belongs to DAY. An extract from the dedication will shew his nervous style and the earnestness with which he could advocate the cause of the oppressed and the unhappy. "This trifle now inscribed with your name, was occasioned by a particular fact ; but to the disgrace of human nature, the subject is sufficiently general to interest every heart not totally impenetrable. We boast of the gentleness of our manners, and think the rugged virtues of antiquity ill-adapted to the genius of the present times. When you ask if BRUTUS sold his country, or the Spartan matrons frequented assemblies of nocturnal riot, it is thought a sufficient answer to say, that we do not expose our children, or whip them at the altar of DIANA ; and that this is the age of generous sentiment, and refined humanity. I will not compare the education of an ancient Spartan with that of a British nobleman. Let eunuchs and *figurants*, those respectable guardians of modern discipline, insult the memory of LYCURGUS ; and fellows of colleges establish their monkish institutions on the ruin of the Lyceum. Let the present age enjoy the boldest panegyrics its admirers can bestow. But if our boasted improvements, and frivolous politeness, be

well acquired by the loss of manly firmness and independence, if in order to feel as men it be necessary to adopt the manners of women, let us at least be consistent, or mingle the excesses of barbarism with the weaknesses of civilization. There are certain forms in which vice appears not only monstrous, but ridiculous. The cruelty of NERO is more disgusting than that of TIBERIUS. When a benevolent mind contemplates the republic of LYCURGUS, its admiration is mixed with a degree of horror. We behold a band of determined patriots, irresistible in war, and inflexible in peace ; souls to which the severity of virtue was more engaging than its enjoyments ; and who seem to court the dangers of combat, only that they might refuse the rewards of victory. Yet this admirable republic is tainted by atrocities which tarnish the lustre of its sublime institutions. When we reflect that to form a small society of heroes, a much greater number of men sank below the rank of brutes ; when we consider the unfortunate helotes, abused, insulted, and enslaved ; we less admire the exaltation of one part of our species, than we execrate the degradation of another. Heroism becomes displeasing at such a price, and we prefer the calm of mediocrity to the terrors of so stormy an excellence. But let us not too hastily triumph in the shame of Sparta, lest we aggravate our own condemnation. Let us remember, there is a people who share the govern-

ment and name of Britons ; among whom the cruelty of SPARTA is renewed without its virtue. It was some excuse for the disciples of LYCURGUS, that if one man had been created by Heaven to obey another, the citizens he had formed best deserved the empire of the world. But what has America to boast ? What are the graces and virtues which distinguish its inhabitants ? What are their triumphs in war, or their inventions in peace ? Inglorious soldiers, yet seditious citizens ; sordid merchants, and indolent usurpers. Behold the men, whose avarice has been more fatal to the interests of humanity, and has more desolated the world than the ambition of its ancient conquerors ! For them the Negro is dragged from his cottage, and his plantain shade ; by them the fury of African tyrants is stimulated by pernicious gold ; the rights of nature are invaded ; and European faith becomes infamous throughout the globe. Yet, such is the inconsistency of mankind. These are the men whose clamours for liberty and independence are heard across the Atlantic ocean ! Murmurings and rebellions are the first fruits of their gratitude, and thus America recompenses Europe for the protection she has bestowed. But are the hopes and fortunes of the species indeed fallen so low, that freedom will desert that country, whose warriors and philosophers have so often conspired to defend her, to seek an asylum in the forests of America ? Much as an impartial

observer may find to blame in Britain, her colonies, I fear, are not more acceptable to Providence. Let the wild, inconsistent claims of America prevail, when they shall be unmixed with the clank of chains, and the groans of anguish. Let her aim a dagger at the breast of her milder parent, if she can advance a step without trampling on the dead and dying carcases of her slaves; but let her remember, that it is in Britain alone, that laws are equally favourable to liberty and humanity: that in Britain the sacred rights of nature have received their most awful ratification. Could I flatter myself that I might contribute to such a cause, or interest the generous minds of my countrymen, to extend an ampler protection to the most innocent and miserable of their own species, I should congratulate myself that I had not lived in vain."

"The Dying Negro," is full of kindred fire with occasional strains of tender and beautiful pathos. As the reader may not be familiar with this poem, I append a longer extract than I otherwise should:—

Why did I, slave, beyond my lot aspire?
 Why did'st thou fan the inauspicious fire?
 For thee I bade my drooping soul revive;
 For thee alone I could have borne to live;
 And love, I said, shall make me large amends,
 For persecuting foes, and faithless friends;
 Fool that I was! inured so long to pain,
 To trust to hope, or dream of joy again.

Joy, stranger guest, my easy faith betrayed,
 And love now points to death's eternal shade,
 There, while I rest from misery's galling load,
 Be thou the care of every pitying God ;
 Nor may that Demon's unpropitious power,
 Who shed his influence on my natal hour,
 Pursue thee too with unrelenting hate,
 And blend with mine the colour of thy fate.
 For thee may those soft hours return again,
 When pleasure led thee smiling o'er the plain,
 Ere, like some hell-born spectre of dismay,
 I crossed thy path, and darkened all the way.
 Ye waving groves, which from this cell I view !
 Ye meads, now glittering with the morning dew !
 Ye flowers, which blush on yonder hated shore,
 That at my baneful step shall fade no more,
 A long farewell ! I ask no vernal bloom—
 No pageant wreaths to wither on my tomb.
 Let serpents hiss and night-shade blacken there,
 To mark the friendless victim of despair !
 And better in th' untimely grave to rot,
 The world and all its cruelties forgot,
 Than dragged once more beyond the Western main,
 To groan beneath some dastard planter's chain,
 Where my poor countrymen in bondage wait
 The slow enfranchisement of lingering fate.
 Oh ! my heart sinks, my dying eyes o'erflow,
 When memory paints the picture of their woe
 For I have seen them, e'er the dawn of day,
 Roused by the lash, begin their cheerless way ;
 Greeting with groans, unwelcome morn's return,
 While rage and shame their gloomy bosoms burn ;
 And, chiding every hour the slow-paced sun,
 Endure their miseries till his race was run ;

No eye to mark their sufferings with a tear,
 No friend to comfort, and no hope to cheer ;
 Then like the dull unpitied brutes repair
 To stalls as wretched, and as coarse a fare ;
 Thank Heaven, one day of misery was o'er,
 And sink to sleep, and wish to wake no more.
 Sleep on ! ye lost companions of my woes,
 For whom in death this tear of pity flows ;
 Sleep, and enjoy the only boon of heaven
 To you in common with your tyrants given ;
 O while soft slumber from their couches flies,
 Still may the balmy blessing steep your eyes ;
 In swift oblivion lull awhile your woes,
 And brightest visions gladden the repose !
 Let fancy, then, unconscious of the change,
 Though our own fields and native forests range :
 Waft ye to each once haunted stream and grove,
 And visit every long-lost scene ye love !
 I sleep no more—nor in the midnight shade
 Invoke ideal phantoms to my aid ;
 Nor wake again abandoned and forlorn,
 To find each dear delusion fled at morn ;
 A slow consuming death let others wait,
 I snatch destruction from unwilling fate.
 Yon ruddy streaks the rising sun proclaim,
 That never more shall beam upon my shame ;
 Bright orb ! for others let thy glory shine,
 Mature the golden grain and purple vine,
 While fettered Africa for Europe toils,
 And nature's plunderers riot on her spoils ;
 Be theirs the gifts thy partial rays supply,
 Be mine the gloomy privilege to die,
 And thou, whose impious avarice and pride
 The holy cross to my sad brow denied,

Forbade me nature's common rights to claim,
 Or share with thee a Christian's sacred name ;
 Thou, too, farewell ! for not beyond the grave
 Extends thy power, nor is my soul thy slave.
 In vain Heaven spread so wide the swelling sea,
 Vast watery barrier, 'tween thy world and me ;
 Swift round the globe, by earth nor Heaven controlled,
 Fly, stern oppression, and dire lust of gold.
 Where'er the hell-hounds mark their bloody way,
 Still nature groans, and man becomes their prey.
 In the wild wastes of Afric's sandy plain,
 Where roars the lion through his drear domain,
 To curb the savage monarch in the chase,
 There too Heaven planted man's majestic race ;
 Bade reason's sons with nobler titles rise,
 Lift high their brow and scan the starry skies.
 What though the sun in his meridian blaze
 Dart on their naked limbs his scorching rays ;
 What though no rosy tints adorn their face,
 No silken tresses shine with flowing grace ;
 Yet of ethereal temper are their souls,
 And in their veins the tide of horror rolls ;
 And valour kindles there the hero's flame,
 Contempt of death, and thirst of martial fame ;
 And pity melts the sympathizing breast,
 Ah ! fatal virtue !—for the brave distrest.
 My tortured bosom, sad remembrance spare !
 Why dost thou plant thy keenest daggers there,
 And shew me what I was and aggravate despair ?
 Ye streams of Gambia, and thou sacred shade !
 Where in my youth's first dawn I joyful stray'd,
 Oft have I roused amid your caverns dim,
 The howling tiger, and the lion grim ;
 In vain they gloried in their headlong force,
 My javelin pierced them in their raging course.

But little did my boding mind bewray,
 The victor and his hopes were doomed a prey,
 To human brutes more fell, more cruel far than they,
 Ah ! what avails the conqueror's bloody mead,
 The generous purpose, or the dauntless deed !
 This hapless breast exposed on every plain,
 And liberty preferred to life in vain ?
 Fallen are my trophies, blasted is my fame,
 Myself become a thing without a name,
 The sport of haughty lords, and e'en of slaves the shame.
 Curst be the winds, and curst the tides which bore,
 These European robbers to our shore !
 O be that hour involved in endless night,
 When first their streamers met my wond'ring sight !
 I called the warriors from the mountain's steep,
 To meet these unknown terrors of the deep ;
 Roused by my voice, their generous bosoms glow,
 They rush indignant and demand the foe,
 And poise the darts of death, and twang the bended bow :
 When lo ! advancing o'er the seaboard plain,
 I marked the leader of a warlike train ;
 Unlike, his features, to our swarthy race,
 And golden hair played round his ruddy face.
 While with insidious smile and lifted hand,
 He thus accosts our unsuspecting band :
 ' Ye valiant chiefs, whom love of glory leads
 To martial combats, and heroic deeds ;
 No fierce invader your retreat explores,
 No hostile banner waves along your shores,
 From the dread tempests of the deep we fly,
 Then lay, ye chiefs, these pointed terrors by :
 And O, your hospitable cares extend,
 So may ye never need the aid ye lend !
 So may ye still repeat to every grove
 The songs of freedom and the strains of love !'

Soft as the accents of the traitor flow,
 We melt with pity and unbend the bow ;
 With liberal hand our choicest gifts we bring,
 And point the wanderers to the freshest spring.
 Nine days we feasted on the Gambian strand,
 And songs of freedom echoed o'er the land,
 When the tenth morn her rising lustre gave,
 The chief approached me by the sounding wave.
 ' O, youth, he said, what gifts can we bestow,
 Or, how requite the mighty debt we owe !
 For lo ! propitious to our vows, the gale
 With milder omens fills the swelling sail.
 To-morrow's sun shall see our ships explore
 These deeps, and quit your hospitable shore.
 Yet while we linger, let us still employ
 The numbered hours in friendship and in joy.
 Ascend our ships ; their treasures are your own
 And taste the produce of a world unknown.'
 He spoke, with fatal eagerness we burn,
 And quit the shores, undestined to return !
 The smiling traitors with insidious care
 The goblet proffer, and the feast prepare,
 Till dark oblivion shades our closing eyes,
 And all disarmed each fainting warrior lies.
 O wretches ! to your future evils blind !
 O morn, for ever present to my mind !
 When bursting from the treach'rous bands of sleep,
 Roused by the murmurs of the wond'rous deep
 I woke to bondage and ignoble pains,
 And all the horrors of a life in chains.
 Ye gods of Afric ! in that dreadful hour,
 Where were your thunders and avenging power !
 Did not my prayers, my groans, my tears invoke
 Your slumbering justice to direct the stroke ?

No power descended to assist the brave,
 No lightening flashed, and I became a slave.'

The negro proceeds to expatiate on love and unrealized dreams, and concludes with a prayer to the Christian's God to lead him to

that sacred shore,
 Where souls are free and men oppress no more.

The touching poem from which the above extract is taken, with its sublime utterances and sympathies, is now forgotten, yet such themes are worthy of the highest genius. Such generous outpourings for the freedom, as well as for the loves and hopes of mortals, prove perpetually refreshing fountains of the truest philosophy to the sorrowing and wayworn pilgrims of life.

CHAPTER IV.

Self-Conquest—Eccentricities—a Journey to Shrewsbury—
 Lucretia and Sabrina—a Trip to France—Troubles by
 Land and Water—an Officer Rebuked—Returns to
 England—Dr. Darwin and the Lichfield School—The
 Orphans, their Fortune and Destiny.

ALTHOUGH DAY closed his poetical labours with the "Dying Negro," and the political poems enumerated in the last chapter, he did not entirely abandon the republic of letters. He had not only vanquished the disappointments of early love ; but had done something more. He had conquered self, which is, perhaps, the most difficult task in life. It is not in the blood-stained battle-field, amid the clash of arms, that the greatest victories are obtained ; but in the silent struggles of the human soul in solitude. DAY fought perseveringly in the field of moral life, and triumphed over those passions which enslave meaner men. Sometimes he indulged in a game of cricket, and was fond of swimming ; but he never mingled in sports which are calculated to impair the mind and morals. He stood apart from prevailing follies. He shunned all kinds of past-time which involve cruelty to animals. He regarded all such practices as immoral and degrading. He could not afford to waste time on selfish pursuits, neither would he allow any action to be virtuous, however laudable, that was performed in the hope

of a reward, either here or hereafter. He had no sympathy with sorrows that spring from refinement, vicious habits, and luxurious ease ; but he was ever solicitous for the welfare of the industrious poor, and would exert himself to the utmost in their behalf. He regarded titles and distinctions of birth with contempt, yet, he was no vague socialist. He respected talent wherever he found it unassociated with vice. He looked upon all men as members of the same great family—as children of one common Father—whose strength and abilities should be ungrudgingly exercised, not for selfish purposes ; but for the harmony and happiness of the whole community. His simplicity of manners and dress were a perpetual remonstrance with the silly customs of society generally. No wonder that such an unfashionable being found it extremely difficult to win a lady's heart, and experience soon convinced him that he must mould some child into the creature of his imagination. For this purpose he procured credentials of his high moral probity, and proceeded in company with his friend JOHN BICKNELL, to an orphan asylum, in the town of Shrewsbury ; and from among the prattling inmates of that Institution, he selected, in the presence of his friend, a beautiful flaxen haired girl of twelve years of age. He named her SABBINA SIDNEY, *Sabrina*, from the Severn, and *Sidney*, from the patriot, ALGERNON SIDNEY, whose character and

writings he held in high estimation. Soon after his return from Shropshire with this orphan child, he proceeded to the Foundling Hospital, London, and obtained a companion of a like age for SABRINA, whom he called LUORETIA. The written conditions on which he obtained these children were to the following effect, "that within a year, he should place one of them with a respectable tradesman, giving one hundred pounds to bind her apprentice, and maintaining her, if she turned out well, till she should marry, or commence business on her own account, in either of which cases, he promised to advance one hundred pounds more." He avowed his intention of keeping and educating the other, with a view to make her his wife, solemnly engaging never to violate her innocence ; and if he should renounce his plan, to maintain her in some creditable family till she should marry, when he would give her five hundred pounds as her wedding portion. For the performance of this singular contract his friend, BICKNELL, was guarantee.

With these girls he went to France, and that they might imbibe no ideas but such as he choose to communicate, he took with him no English servant ; yet with all his prudence and forethought, his scheme failed. He found that human nature was too powerful for his philosophic speculations ; that it is the same, with slight variations, in all climes and under all circumstances. These children teased

and perplexed him continually, they frequently quarrelled, and at length fell ill with the small-pox. He was now obliged to fill the office of a nurse. They kept him to their bedside, and would not be left for the space of ten minutes, without screaming and making the house ring with their noises. He hired a French maid, but as she could not utter a word in English, they would not be left alone in her company. Health, however, returned and with it their former beauty. One fine day he took them out for an excursion on the Rhone, when a sudden squall of wind upset the boat and capsized them into the water, and this accident might have proved fatal, had he not been an excellent swimmer. By this means he managed to save them both from a watery grave.

While at Lyons he was informed that a young French officer had spoken to his pupils with too great freedom. He immediately called the young man to account, and producing a pistol, informed him that he was ready to defend their minds as he would their persons from insult, at the risk of his life. The officer apologized and disavowed any intention of offence.

After a stay of eight months at Avignon and Lyons, he returned to England for the purpose of separating the orphans, who had nearly exhausted his patience and dissolved his dreams. On leaving Lyons he was much annoyed by a large number of

poor persons, who had been the unworthy recipients of his indiscriminate charity. They surrounded his house, followed him out of the town, and requested him to leave a sum of money behind to relieve their wants in his absence, but this unseemly request was not granted.

Having arrived in London, he procured a home for LUCRETIA on Ludgate Hill; apprenticed her to a milliner, where she grew up, and conducted herself with great propriety; and at length married a substantial linen-draper. SABBINA, who proved the greater favourite, continued with him twelve months longer.

In the spring of 1770, DAY paid a visit to Dr. ERASMUS DARWIN, at Lichfield, then in the zenith of his fame, and took possession of a pleasantly situated house at Stow-hill; and there he passed one of the sunniest years of his strange existence. His household consisted of SABBINA and one or two female servants. There he mingled in a select community of literary and scientific friends, who held monthly meetings alternately at each others houses, for political and literary chat. DARWIN called these monthly gatherings, *Lunar meetings*, but DAY facetiously suggested *Lunatic meetings* as a more appropriate title. Among those who attended were DAY, DARWIN, WILLIAM and THOMAS SEWARD, Dr. JAMES KEIR, Dr. SMALL, a man of some reputation in his time, and on whom

DAY wrote an affectionate epitaph. LOVELL EDGEWORTH, who lived at Stow-hill, JAMES WATT, the improver of the steam-engine, and his distinguished partner, BOULTON, Dr. PRIESTLEY, Dr. WITHERING, Sir JOSEPH BANKS, Sir W. HERSCHEL, Dr. PARR, the eccentric Lord MONBODDO, Mr. GALTON, the father of the late Mrs. SCHIMMEL-PENNINCK, and several others. Dr. JOHNSON also appeared among them, during his visits to his native city. All these celebrities lived within an easy distance from each other, and in continual intercourse. Mrs. SCHIMMEL-PENNINCK has sketched some of these characters in her recently published autobiography.

DAY had resigned LUCRETIA to the care of the Ludgate-hill milliner, but detained SABRINA in the vague hope of training her according to his singular and romantic ideas of womanhood ; but his experiments failed. He found it impossible to fortify her mind against a dread of pain, and a sense of danger. He dropped melting sealing wax on her arms ; but she could not endure it without flinching. He fired pistols at her garments, loaded with powder, which she believed were loaded with ball. Naturally enough, she started and screamed. He tried her fidelity by communicating pretended secrets ; but she told them to the servants. Hence, after many fruitless trials, he gave up the idea of making SABRINA his wife, and abandoned his apparent absurdities. His confidence, too, in a

system of training according to the theory of ROUSSEAU began to subside. His stoical aversion to modern manners also cooled down, and he placed SABRINA at a boarding-school at Sutton Coldfield in Warwickshire.

Although DAY's educational experiments proved a failure, inasmuch as his scheme was found to be impracticable, and that it was impossible to make creatures of flesh and blood the representatives of his far-fetched philosophy, through which he endeavoured to invest these girls with almost super-human attributes, their future conduct did great credit to his singular mode of treatment. They both became amiable and exemplary women. Their virtues secured to them friends wherever they went, and DAY more than fulfilled his contract. After supporting SABRINA at school for three years, he allowed her fifty pounds a year. She ultimately married JOHN BICKNELL, the very man who accompanied him on his pilgrimage. At this time Mr. BICKNELL was in business as a barrister, with fair prospects of success. DAY, however, was not pleased with the match ; he thought there was too great a disparity of years between them to allow of mutual happiness. He gave her the promised five hundred pounds, and subsequently, when she became a widow, with two boys, he allowed her thirty pounds a year, to assist the efforts he expected her to make for the maintenance of herself and children.

SABRINA lived for many years at Greenwich, as housekeeper in the family of Dr. CHARLES BURNET, Rector of St. Paul's, Deptford, who was considered one of the ablest scholars and critics of his time. He possessed a splendid library, which was purchased in 1817, the time of his death, by the nation, at a cost of £14,000, and placed in the British Museum.

CHAPTER V.

A Trip to Derby—The Portrait—The Sneyd Family—Honora and Elizabeth—John Andre—Rejected Addresses—Personal Restraints—Leaves Lichfield—Travels in France, Holland, and the Austrian Netherlands—Visits Rousseau—Political Pamphlets—Fragment of a Letter on Slavery—Dr. Scott's Criticism—Extract.

IN the month of August, 1770, DAY accompanied several of his Lichfield friends to the town of Derby in order to have their portraits painted. A painter named WRIGHT had obtained considerable celebrity in the provinces as a portrait painter, and to him the friends went. DAY, however, must be *eccentric* even in this matter. His friends were taken in a sitting posture, but he must be standing. He must also have his opinions represented in the picture. He stands, therefore, in the open air, with the poetry of nature in the background, the surrounding sky tempestuous and dark, to image forth his gloomy view of society, as he saw it revolving around. His left arm rests against a column, inscribed to HAMPDEN, to show his reverence for the character of that distinguished patriot. He gazes thoughtfully towards Heaven, with an open book in his drooping right hand, the open part containing the speech of HAMPDEN against the grant of ship money demanded by the First CHARLES. This was indicative of DAY's love of freedom and readiness to battle

with all kinds of despotism. A flash of lightning radiates the gloom, and plays over the volume, to represent his desire to see the lightning of truth permeating and purifying the social and political atmosphere. A good likeness was the result, while the attitude and peculiarities of the subject afford glimpses of the extraordinary character of the man. This portrait was for many years in the possession of MARIA EDGEWORTH, and may still be seen in the family mansion at Edgeworth-town.

During DAY's stay in the valley of Stow, he became intimately acquainted with a worthy family of the name of SNEYD. There were two daughters, HONORA and ELIZABETH, and he and his friend EDGEWORTH had frequent opportunities of conversing with these young ladies. HONORA, the elder of the two, was accomplished, and possessed many personal charms. She had read and admired his poems, and was in the habit of bestowing favourable criticisms on them. This was pleasing to the poet, and he offered HONORA his hand. He had, however, mistaken her gentle criticisms for other and warmer sentiments, for she candidly told him, that she admired his genius, respected his virtues, and was proud of his friendship ; but her heart was another's. HONORA had already given her heart to that brave young soldier, JOHN ANDRE, who entered the army with the laudable view of winning a position which should enable him honourably to marry the object of

his choice ; instead of which he met death on the scaffold, in the morning of life. In the heat of the American War, he fell a victim to that simplicity and over-zeal which are sometimes associated with the highest genius. To HONORA's less candid and less beautiful sister, ELIZABETH, DAY transferred the offer of his hand ; but ELIZABETH dallied with her suitor, and told him that she could have loved him, had he acquired the habits of a gentleman, instead of those austere singularities which rendered him so remarkable. This reply inspired hope, and he began to ascribe his former failures to the cause which ELIZABETH assigned for not accepting him. Hence, he resolved to renounce some of his prejudices, and to approach the fickle path of the world. Accordingly, he went to Paris, where he spent a year in endeavouring to acquire the habits of a man of fashion. There he learnt fencing and dancing, and submitted to many inconveniences in order to overcome those peculiarities which time had strengthened. His friend EDGEWORTH says, in his memoirs, "It was astonishing to behold the energy with which he persevered in these pursuits. I have seen him stand between two boards, which reached higher than his knees, from a desire to make them straight ; these boards were adjusted with screws, but the screwing was in vain. I could not help pitying my philosophic friend, pent up in durance vile for hours together, with his feet in the stocks,

a book in his hand, and contempt in his heart." He presented himself to ELIZABETH, reminding her of her promise. To her, however, he appeared far more ungraceful than in his natural simplicity, and she said, "I confess that THOMAS DAY, blackguard, (as he sometimes styled himself,) is more pleasing to me, than THOMAS DAY, gentleman."*

This was in truth a great disappointment after so many trials. He had now reached his twenty-fifth year, and felt himself farther than ever from the Hymenial altar. He determined, on reflection, to make no fresh effort towards a matrimonial alliance; but to leave the fair sex to more successful suitors, and he quitted Lichfield for ever. He now became a wanderer, travelling from place to place. He stayed a few weeks with his mother in Berkshire, spent a winter in Paris, another at Avignon, and a third at Lyons. He visited the old man ROUSSEAU, whose writings had exerted such a wonderful influence over him. He passed a summer in Holland, and another in the Austrian Netherlands, mingling with the people, and studying the various forms of civil and political society. His leisure, in the intervals of travels, was devoted to reading and observation. He, likewise, turned his attention to a new branch of literature, and published

* These two sisters became successively the wives of his friend LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

several political pamphlets, namely, "Reflections on the present state of England and the Independence of America." "Reflections on the Peace and the East India Bill." "A Dialogue between a Justice of the Peace and a Farmer," and "A Letter to ARTHUR YOUNG, Esq., on the Wool Bill." The interest of these ephemeral publications, although they attracted much attention at the time, has passed; it will therefore be unnecessary to dwell upon them here. It is a different matter, however, with his "Fragment of a Letter on Slavery," for the day of universal freedom has not yet dawned.

DAY received a letter from an American slaveholder, who had read the "Dying Negro," requesting to know his sentiments on the subject of Negro Slavery. DAY immediately replied, and this reply on the solicitation of several friends, was afterwards published under the title, "A Fragment of a Letter on Slavery." It passed through several editions, and is one of the most eloquent and powerful protests against the "peculiar institution" that was ever written. Dr. PRICE, in his observations on the "Importance of the American Revolution," says, "Mr. DAY'S is a remonstrance, full of energy, directed to the American States by a warm and able friend to the rights of mankind." One extract will be sufficient to reveal its character:—

As you expressly desire to know my sentiments, I must waive both preface and ceremony, and address you with the

modest freedom that becomes one man when he is speaking to another upon the most important question in the universe. As a member of that society which has now made a solemn appeal to Heaven, and taken up arms against the nation to which it owes its establishment, you must admit that there are such things as right and justice, to which the whole human species have an indefeasable claim. Indeed, unless there be such a thing as justice, it is in vain we inquire about its precepts, or refer to its arbitration. He that admits no right but force, no justice but superior violence, arms every man against himself, and justifies all excesses. If it be lawful to injure because we can ; if we may seize the property of another, insult his person, or force him to labour for our luxury or caprice, merely because he is weaker ; this principle will be equally fatal to ourselves, when fortune shall strip us of that power which is our only prerogative, and shift the plea of superiority. You are to remember that, upon this supposition, your slaves, the instant they shall become the strongest, will have a right to yourself, and every other gentleman of the Southern Colonies ; will have a right to force you to labour naked in the sun to the music of whips and chains ; to rob you of everything which is now dear to your indolence, or necessary to your pleasures ; to goad you to every species of servile drudgery, and punish you for their amusement or caprice ; will have a right to exhaust your youth in servitude, and, to abandon your age to wretchedness and disease ; in one word, sir, they will have a right to use you as you do them. Let us, therefore, leave principles which can be maintained by no one but a professed enemy of mankind ; who would at one stroke extirpate everything which alleviates the evils of life, and arm every man in an eternal war against his fellow-creatures, to inquire what are the real dictates of that justice, whose existence, I am persuaded, we both allow. You, therefore, admit there are

certain claims, which, for want of a better name, we call rights, to which the human species have an indisputable title. To express myself in other words, 'There is a method of pursuing our own happiness in such a manner, that we may promote the general good at the same time, or, at least, not interfere with it ; this, our reason assures us, is the privilege of every created being : and while he confines himself within these bounds, we feel the most cordial approbation of his conduct. We love, and esteem, and sympathize with him, from the very constitution of our nature. On the contrary, whenever any one disturbs or injures a being acting in this manner, or prevents him from attaining the good to which he is impelled, we feel our hatred and indignation most forcibly excited against the aggressor. We consider such a character as armed against the welfare of the world, and as one who is endeavouring to make the common good subservient to his own selfishness. I appeal to the generosity of your own nature for the existence of these principles. Have they not, a thousand times, animated you to acts of virtue and humanity, as well as inspired you with an involuntary reverence for all who acted from their impulse? Have they not often pleaded the cause of the wretch that lay trembling and defenceless at your feet, and in spite of the prejudices of your country and education, whispered to your mind that one human being ought not to hold his existence by the tenure of another's will? Do not these principles now inspire you, and frequently impel you beyond the bounds of prudence and safety, while what you call your country's cause animates you to exertion? But this cause is only the united cause and interest of every particular man ; those rights which the great Creator taught him to discover when he gave him reason, which he urges him to defend by passion, and which a mind like yours prizes beyond all the qualifications of sense, and dares to grasp at even while it is perishing. This appears

to me to be a plain and concise deduction of morality, which means nothing more than that method or rule of conduct by which the whole human species may attain the greatest possible degree of happiness. And I rather choose to express myself so, because I thus comprehend all sects and opinions. The religious man allows that the happiness of the species is the great end of the Deity, which he promotes by the rewards and punishments of a future state; the disciple of Shaftesbury understands this, when he talks of the beauty of virtue and the love of order; and even the gloomy pupil of HOBBS, who resolves everything into self-interest, must allow the existence of moral distinctions, so far as they influence the welfare of the species. This universal morality appears to me to be the only rational and legal foundation of all human government; which ought to be nothing more than the application of this general rule to particular societies, and the enforcing it by civil establishments. If, therefore, it be granted that the rights of a nation are nothing more than the rights of every man in it, and that all just and legal authority supposes a delegated power entrusted solely for the purpose of promoting the general good, it will appear evident, that every individual in the universe possesses certain rights, which no man can divest him of without injustice, unless he be guilty of some crime against society which exposes him to its vengeance. Hence, it follows, that whenever any nation attacks the rights and happiness of another nation, it deserves to find its own destruction in the attempt; and whenever any individual presumes to exercise this species of authority over his fellow-creatures, he must be a tyrant and an oppressor, whom it is permitted to destroy by every possible method. Whoever would deny this, must either deny the existence of right and justice entirely, and then it is in vain to argue; or must shew some natural distinction by which one part of the species is entitled to privileges from which the other is excluded.

* * * * *

Slavery is the absolute dependence of one man upon another ; and is, therefore, as inconsistent with all ideas of justice as despotism is with the rights of nature. It is a crime so monstrous against the human species, that all who practice it deserve to be extirpated from the earth. It is no little indirect attack upon the safety and happiness of our fellow-creatures ; but one that boldly strikes at the foundations of all humanity and justice. Robbers invade the property, and murderers the life of human beings : but he that holds another in bondage, subjects the whole sum of his existence to oppression, bereaves him of every hope, and is, therefore, more detestable than robber and assassin combined. But if no one who has common feeling will commit the outrage, no one who has common sense will attempt to justify it by argument ; since it would involve him in the grossest and most inextricable contradictions. He must allow that every man has by nature a right to life, yet that every other man has a right to rob him of it ; that every man has an equal right to subsistence, yet that every other man may deprive him of all the means ; and that while every individual is justified by nature and the Deity in pursuing his own happiness by all innocent methods, every other individual is equally justified in making him miserable. In short, it is reducing everything to the state before described, a state of contest and desolation, from which right and justice are equally excluded.

Of you, sir, who say that you have several slaves, I beg leave to ask what are the rights you claim over them ? Have you a right to torture them when they are guilty of no fault ? Have you a right to kill them for your diversion ? Is your power circumscribed by no bounds ; and are there particular beings who bring into the world all the rights which you yourself can pretend to, but have so entirely lost them by being transported into another country, as to be beyond the protection both of nature and of nature's God ?

Are there no whips, no gibbets, no punishments more

dreadful than death itself for contumacious slaves ? and what is this, but claiming the detestable power I have mentioned above, that of making other beings miserable for your interest or amusement ? Who, sir, gave you a title to their labours, or a right to confine them to loathsome drudgery ? and if you have a right to this, what are the punishments you pretend to inflict but so many additional outrages ? Has a robber a claim upon your life because you withhold your property ; or a ravisher a right to a woman's blood because she defends her chastity ? Either, then, prove your right to their labours, or acknowledge that the punishments inflicted upon fugitive slaves are a flagitious insult upon justice, humanity, and common sense.

Permit me, here, to examine for a moment the nature of the title by which you claim an irredeemable property in the labours of your fellow-creatures. A wretch, devoid of compassion and understanding, who calls himself a king of some part of Africa, which suffers the calamity of being frequented by the Europeans, seizes his innocent subjects, or engages in an unnecessary war to furnish himself with prisoners ; these are loaded with chains, torn from all their comforts and connections, and driven like beasts to the slaughter-house, down to the sea-shore, where the mild subjects of a Christian government and a religious king are waiting to agree for the purchase, and to transport them to America. They are then thrust by hundreds into the infectious hold of a ship, in which the greater part perishes by disease, while the rest are reserved to experience the candour and humanity of American patriots. If you have never yet considered it ; pause here for a moment, and endeavour to impress upon your mind the feelings of a being full as sensible, and, perhaps, more innocent than you or I, which is thus torn in an instant from everything that makes life agreeable ; from country, friends, and parents ; from the intercourse of mutual affection with

mistress, lover, or child ; which, possessed of feelings more exquisite than European hearts can conceive, is separated for ever from all it loves, that, reduced to a depth of misery, which, even in the midst of freedom and affluence, would be sufficient to overwhelm the most hardened disposition, instead of friends and comforters, and obsequious attendants, sees itself surrounded with unrelenting persecutors and unpitying enemies ; wretches, who, by long intercourse with misery, are grown callous to its agonies ; who answer tears with taunts, and complaints with torture ! I shudder at the horrors which I describe, and blush to be a human creature. Yet these are not the colours of description, but a recital of facts less strong than the reality. Can any man reflect upon these things, without unutterable remorse ? Can he know that, perhaps, while he is wallowing in luxury and sensuality, there are beings whose existence he has embittered, mothers shrieking for their children, and children perishing for want of their mother's care ; wretches who are frantic with rage, and shame, and desperation, or pining in all the agonies of slow and painful death, who might have been at peace if he had never existed ? Can any man know this, and hope for mercy, either from his fellow-creatures, or his God ? After the arrival of the surviving wretches in America, you well-know in what manner they are transferred to their conscientious masters ; how they are brought to the market, naked, weeping, and in chains ; how one man dares to examine his fellow-creatures as he would do beasts, and bargain for their persons ; how all the most sacred duties, affections, and feelings of the human heart, are violated and insulted ; and thus you dare to call yourselves the masters of wretches whom you have acquired by fraud, and retain by violence ! While I am tracing this picture, which you and every man who has been in the islands or the Southern colonies of America, knows to be true, my astonishment exceeds even my

horror, to find it possible that any one should seriously doubt, whether an equitable title to hold human beings in bondage can be thus acquired!

With what face, sir, can he who has never respected the rights of nature in another, pretend to claim them in his own favour? How dare the inhabitants of the Southern colonies speak of privileges and justice? Is money of so much more importance than life? Or have the Americans shared the dispensing power of St. Peter's successors, to excuse their own observance of those rules which they impose on others? If there be an object truly ridiculous in Nature, it is an American patriot signing resolutions of independency with the one hand, and with the other brandishing a whip over his affrighted slaves.

DAY's publications in favour of human freedom and the rights of humanity, warmed many an English bosom, and gave a new impulse to the public feeling, which ultimately called forth the talents and energies of such heroes as CLARKSON, WILBERFORCE, and others, in the anti-slavery cause.

CHAPTER VI.

The Right at last—Miss Esther Milnes—Her Devotion, Fortune, and Accomplishments—Love and Doubt—Day's Unworldliness and Candour—His Terms Accepted—Marriage—Thomas Lowndes—Mrs. Day's Essays and Poems—Settles at Stapleford Abbots—Music, Artificial and Natural—New Trials and Happy Results.

DAY was not destined, as he imagined, to a life of celibacy. In the select circle of kindred spirits before mentioned, he occasionally met a young Yorkshire lady in the heyday of life, of prepossessing features, and of modest and retiring habits. She seldom conversed, but when she did, her words were always to the purpose, and evinced a refined and cultivated understanding. Her poetic and philosophic ideas very naturally attracted the attention of DAY, who had frequent opportunities of conversing with her upon those unfashionable topics which marked his character. He was now a happier man, and no longer felt alone in the world, for he had at least found a genial companion, a lady-friend after his own heart, one who evidently appreciated his talents, and deeply sympathized with his views. This lady was Miss ESTHER MILNES, a native of Wakefield. She possessed a fortune equal to his own, and was well-known in that

neighbourhood for her philanthropic labours. DAY had long, but unsuccessfully, sought a lady of similar tastes, with a soul akin to his own. He was, by no means, a mercenary speculator. He was too unworldly to be avaricious. He would not even write for money. A strong sense of duty alone moved his pen, which was ever exercised for the benefit of those who are least able to help themselves; for, in a letter to JOHN BICKNELL, he says:—"The first duty of every man who professes the difficult and the glorious task of enlightening his fellow-creatures, should be to prove himself in every instance which occurs, disinterested: it is this which gives the greatest possible force to his writings, and the greatest influence among beings who naturally recur from his doctrine to his life. It is this alone which can persuade mankind that there is something more in some men's pretensions to virtue than a subtle scheme of uniting the favourable opinion of the world to those advantages for which so many are excited to forfeit it. If a man of real genius arises and instructs the world upon principles like these, there is nothing wanting to the dignity of his fame, or the satisfaction of his own mind. He has discharged his duty, and whether he succeed or fail, he may retire with peace to the grave, or to the tranquility of an honourable leisure."

MISS MILNES had read DAY's writings, admired

his patriotic and generous sentiments, his love of freedom and contempt of fashion. She was also acquainted with the romantic incidents of his life. She looked upon his tall, though not ungraceful form, with something more than a woman's curiosity, for she loved him with an affection that warmed with time, and, although DAY did not care to avow it, this affection was mutual. A gentleman of DAY's acquaintance, Dr. SMALL, knowing his desire to settle in marriage, and thinking that such a favourable opportunity might not again occur, quietly rebuked him for his apparent indifference to Miss MILNES, and expressed his surprise that he should carry his affected stoicism so far as actually to create a doubt in the mind of the lady as to his sincerity. DAY replied, "I know and feel this lady's merit and nothing but her large fortune prevents me from wishing that I had it in my power to effect such an union ; for the plan of life which I have laid down for myself is too remote from common opinions, to admit of flattering myself with the expectation of so much conformity from a person of her affluent circumstances."

It was not until two years of the tenderest devotion on her part had passed away, and which she could not hide from friends about her, that he ventured to propose marriage on his old terms. He required her to renounce all the vanities and fashions of town life, even its moderate pleasures,

and to retire with him into some leafy seclusion where books and a career of utility and active benevolence should constitute her chief pleasures. To such, seemingly, unlovable terms, Miss MILNES readily assented. Something more, however, was required of this devoted woman. In order to satisfy his unworldliness and to shew that he sought her heart and not her fortune, he insisted that her property should be placed beyond his control, so that, should she become weary of his system of living, she might return to her former course of life. To this request, also, Miss MILNES consented, and on the seventh day of August, 1778, they were married in the city of Bath.

It has been stated that Miss MILNES was a native of Yorkshire; but I find no traces of her life until her twelfth year, when she was an inmate of a lady's seminary in Queen's Square, Bloomsbury. Here, it seems, she devoted much of her spare time to the composition of short essays and poems, and to the study of music. She did not pursue these chaste studies with a view to fame, her chief objects being self-culture, and the amusement and edification of her numerous young friends. A few extracts from some of her school-girl productions, will exhibit some of the graces of her character. It was her wonted custom to read systematically the works of the best English authors, that she might be able to express her own thoughts in the

most appropriate language. How she succeeded remains to be seen ; many of her poems are remarkable for their tone and finish, especially when her age is taken into consideration, for most of these simple pieces were produced while the authoress was yet in her teens. On entering the marriage state, she entirely abandoned the Muses for the practical duties of domestic life.

“The pleasing simplicity,” writes her nephew, the late THOMAS LOWNDES, “which prevails through Mrs. DAY’s poetry, whatever its merits may be, is an exact and faithful representation of the unaffected simplicity of her manners, as all who had the pleasure of knowing her will acknowledge.” That her religion was cheerful and elevating, the following child-prayer, will abundantly prove :—

Thou everlasting Lord of Heaven and Earth,
 Who gave the beauteous forms of nature birth,
 At whose command, this globe from nothing sprung,
 When all the stars for joy together sung ;
 Whose power divine composed the human frame,
 And breathed therein the soul’s celestial flame,
 On whom mortality’s frail race depend ;
 Before thy dread majestic throne I bend,
 Benign Celestial Parent ! deign to hear
 My supplication with a generous ear.
 Oh ! in the days of giddy, wandering youth,
 May I remember thee, Great God of Truth !
 Beware of pleasure’s vain, deceitful wiles,
 When drest in all her captivating smiles,

She tries to alienate my heart from Thee!
 And make my feet from paths of wisdom flee.
 How vain, the utmost joys that earth can boast,
 If thy soul-gladdening approbation's lost.
 Without thy favour, what is all below?
 Wealth is but poverty and grandeur woe;
 Ne'er may I do thy will through servile fear,
 But genuine love and gratitude sincere,
 Still may their silken cords my service bind,
 Their nobler motives rule my willing mind;
 Since too exalted thy unerring ways,
 Too much bewildered in a seeming maze,
 To be in this dark being understood,
 May I, O Lord! omniscient and good,
 Not blindly censure, what I can't explore,
 But with a pious confidence adore,
 May that enlarged benevolence be mine,
 That boundless love, that charity divine,
 Which from celestial mansions, Jesus brought,
 By spotless precept, fair example taught;
 That does each vain distinction nobly shun,
 And is diffusive as the blessed sun:
 With sweet compassion may my bosom glow,
 May I delight to soften human woe,
 Relieve pale want's dejected, pining race,
 And dry the tears that cloud the mourner's face
 If doomed myself to feel affliction's smart,
 And grief's sharp arrows in my bleeding heart,
 Still may I bless the Author of my pains,
 Convinced in all Thy dealings, mercy reigns.
 Direct my views by faith's enlightening ray,
 To those bright realms of everlasting day,
 Where fleeting, transient, sorrows are repaid,
 Crowned with immortal joys that never fade;

May Reason, her kind influence maintain,
 And bind my passions with her golden chain,
 Each wild desire, each erring wish control,
 Nor suffer Fancy to delude my soul;
 May she from prejudice my mind defend,
 And give me candour, Truth's impartial friend.

In an admonitory letter to a young friend, one of her school-associates, about to launch forth into the real world, these sentiments occur:—

A proud, arrogant frame of mind, is what both God and man take delight in humbling, whereas a just sense of our own imperfections, a genuine humility of heart, with a steady reliance upon that Power on which the universe rests, must recommend us to His favour, who alone can prove a never-failing Protector. Therefore, my Caroline, be not dejected now you are going to embark on life's tempestuous ocean, but take reason for your pilot, and as Heaven has blessed you with a sufficient share of understanding to be capable of making proper distinctions, I hope your own good sense will enable you to avoid the rocks on which too many inconsiderate beings have been wrecked. I think, pleasure seems one of the greatest enemies which youth has to encounter. What numbers are led away by her enchanting influence! To take innocent pleasure in moderation is far from being blameable; for relaxation is necessary to unbend the mind, and enable us to return to the duties and serious occupations of life with fresh vigour and alacrity. Recreation is to the mind, what sleep is to the body; in a proper degree it strengthens and refreshes; in excess, it weakens and enervates. There is no necessity that in order to be virtuous, we should be gloomy, unsociable beings, averse to every species of enjoyment. Religion never appears so amiable as when it wears the

smile of complacency and cheerfully partakes of those blessings which the beneficent hand of Providence so liberally bestows.

Superstition, I believe, results from a gloomy dread of the Deity, without that pure, sincere affection which his goodness demands. The superstitious form erroneous notions of the Deity, they regard him in a stern, morose light, as prone to punish the smallest transgression in his creatures, and disgusted with their most innocent enjoyments; though the benignity and complacency of the Supreme Being, are everywhere, throughout the wide volume of creation, written in the most conspicuous characters. In the cheerful scenes of nature, every beautiful, smiling object that presents itself to me, seems to say in the most eloquent language, *Thou wert created to be happy.*

In a subsequent letter to the same friend are the following sensible remarks :—

The consciousness of rectitude is indeed the sweetest balm, the most effectual comforter in all those distresses to which the virtuous are liable; if injured, or oppressed by the shafts of malice, the sense of our own innocence will always in some measure disarm malice of its sting; if overwhelmed by misfortune, which no human foresight could prevent, conscious goodness is still the noblest, nay, the only true support.

How melancholy is it, to consider that so many of our sex should think of nothing but the embellishment of a body, which must soon, or late, moulder into its original dust, whilst they entirely neglect their nobler part, which is an emanation of divinity, and will exist for ever.

The mind that is stored with a variety of fine sentiments, and beautiful ideas, finds an inexhaustible fund of entertainment within itself, and consequently needs not have recourse

to that giddy, fantastic whirl of amusements, in which so many are absorbed.

How truly laudable will it be in you when living in the gay world, to consider truth and wisdom as the noblest distinctions, the virtues as the brightest ornaments, and rectitude of heart and manners, as the genuine source of fidelity.

It would appear that Mrs. DAY kept a kind of diary, or note-book, in which she was in the habit of writing select thoughts and brief essays on a variety of topics. A few thoughts from these papers may be interesting. On marriage, she writes:—

When two congenial minds, possessed of virtue, understanding, and sensibility, are united in Hymen's bands, by the gentle tie of love, strengthened by the golden cord of friendship, I can conceive no happiness equal to what the conjugal state must afford. But, on the other hand, surely no misery can be equal to that, which this most intimate union must produce, when it is not contracted from any motives of esteem and tenderness, but from the unworthy views of interest and grandeur.

On "Politeness," she writes:—

I think the true criterion of politeness is a sincere, uniform endeavour to render others happy, embellished by a graceful manner of obliging, and united to a most refined species of decorum. It never displays itself in importunate civility or unworthy adulation. But this happy talent has nature for its basis, though it may be refined by knowledge, and a frequent intercourse with the more polished, enlightened part of mankind. Politeness adds a new lustre to excellence, and places it in a more amiable point of view.

In another paper are these thoughts on "Old Age":—

The gloomy night of human existence, which damps the vital spirit, obscures the light of reason, and draws a dark veil over scenes around us. But there is a period properly termed the evening of our days, in which the wise and good appear with peculiar dignity. When the joyous morn of youth, and the ardent noon of manhood are past, then comes the peaceful eve of life, which, to the virtuous, like the close of a fine summer day, is clear, temperate and serene.

Her characteristic reflections, on her Birthday, should not be passed lightly by; they are worthy of maturer years:—

Upon this day, in which sixteen revolving years of my life are completed, let me devote a short time to serious reflections on the subject of my creation, and the returns I ought to make to that Goodness which has bestowed life upon me, and crowned this first gift with a thousand other valuable ones. What use should I make of the existence which Heaven has granted me? I should, doubtless, live up to the dignity of my reasonable nature, by adoring my great Creator, and obeying his divine laws. This conduct will contribute to render me useful to others, and to secure my own felicity, both through the fleeting years of time, and the ever-rolling ages of eternity. It is not sufficient that I shun criminal pursuits, I must not wholly abandon myself to frivolous ones, and consume all my fugitive, my inestimable moments, in the flowery paths of indolence and light amusement. Innocent pleasures I may moderately enjoy, but must not make them the sole business of my life; for that would be beneath the grandeur of a human soul, its illustrious original, and immortal expectations. No! I should cultivate in my soul the noble principle of genuine piety and virtue, and illuminate my mind with knowledge: it is incumbent on me to

serve my fellow-creatures with those means which a bounteous Providence has granted me, and to practice every virtue belonging to my station, then will every pleasure be doubly delightful, from being sweetened with intervals of rational employment, and the enlivening consciousness of having discharged my duty.

Mrs. DAY's verses also evince a similar tone of piety and love of virtue, and to her may justly be ascribed her own lines to a young friend, for she truly possessed :—

A soul enlarged above each selfish aim,
Which soared to loftier views than mortal fame.

For a brief period after their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. DAY occupied apartments at Hampstead. Mr. EDGEWORTH says :—

My wife and I went to see the new married couple at Hampstead. It was the depth of winter ; the ground was covered with snow, and, to our great surprise, we found Mrs. DAY walking with her husband on the heath, wrapt up in a frieze cloak, and her feet well fortified with thick shoes. We had always heard that Mrs. DAY was particularly delicate ; but now she gloried in rude health, or rather was proud of having followed her husband's advice about her health, advice which was, in this respect, undoubtedly excellent.

In 1779, DAY purchased a small house and a few acres of land at Abridge, near Stapleford Abbots, in Essex, where they resided until the spring of 1781.

The house was indifferent [says the same authority,] and the land worse. The one he proposed to enlarge, the other

to improve, according to the best and latest systems of agriculture. The house was of brick, with but one good room, and it was ill-adapted in other respects to the residence of a family. He built, at a considerable expense, convenient offices; also a small addition to the house.

When Mr. DAY determined to dip his unsullied hands in mortar, he bought at a stall 'Ware's Architecture.' This he read with persevering assiduity for three or four weeks before he began his operations. He had not, however, followed this new occupation a week, before he became tired of it, as it completely deranged his habits of discussion with Mrs. DAY in their daily walks in the fields, or prevented their close application to books when in the house. Masons calling for supplies of various sorts, which had not been suggested in the great body of architecture, that he had procured with so much care, annoyed the young builder exceedingly. Sills, lintels, door and window cases, were wanting before they had been thought of; and the carpenter, to whose presence he had looked forward, but at a distant period, was now summoned and hastily set to work to keep the masons a-going. Mr. DAY was deep in a treatise, written by some French agriculturist, to prove that any soil may be rendered fertile by sufficient ploughing. When the masons desired to know where he would have the window of the new room on the first floor, I was present at the question, and offered to assist my friend. No! he sat immovable in his chair, and gravely demanded of the mason, whether the wall might not be built first, and a place for the window cut out afterwards. The mason stared at Mr. DAY with an expression of the most unfeigned surprise, 'Why, Sir, to be sure, it is very possible; but, I believe, sir, it is more common to put in the window cases while the house is building, and not afterwards.'

Mr. DAY, however, with great coolness, ordered the wall

to be built without any opening for windows, which was done accordingly. The room was afterwards used by Mrs. DAY as a lumber-room.

At their simple home at Abridge, new and unexpected trials awaited his patient and uncomplaining wife. He allowed her to keep no female servant, but required her to perform the various duties of the household with her own hands, which she cheerfully did. She was not one of those who believe in the utility of delicate fingers, and are afraid to soil their hands about useful work; she was passionately fond of music and played sweetly on the harpsichord; but this soothing instrument and her music books were banished at his strange request; not that he disliked the voice of music or could not appreciate the harmony of sweet sounds, but, in his opinion, they were luxuries which might be dispensed with without serious loss. "Besides" he would say, "we have no right to luxuries while the poor want bread." This was almost too severe, but she bore all with the most exemplary patience. Even Milton would have suffered this inexpensive luxury, for the great poet regarded music as the

sphere-descended maid,
Friend of pleasure, wisdom's aid.

but music and dancing were not in DAY's vocabulary, nor in accordance with his system of living. It was said that this amiable woman sometimes shed tears over the various trials made upon her disposi-

tion and temper, but murmured not. She felt the true tendency of his singular habits ; they were in harmony with his notions of right, and that was enough for her. The paucity of her wants rendered her freer and more cheerful, and a happier couple, perhaps, never existed in this world of matrimonial differences.

CHAPTER VII.

The Practical Reformer—The People's Rights—Speeches at Chelmsford and Cambridge—Letter to Dr. Jebb—Political Sentiments—Last Verses.

DAY now appeared on the side of the people as a practical reformer. He became a member of a small association of extreme liberals, and addressed large meetings in Essex and Cambridgeshire. He advocated an extension of the franchise, a reduction of sinecures, and denounced the prevailing abuse of the public money and unjust and indirect taxation ; and this he did at a period when it required considerable moral courage to handle such unpopular questions. The democratic tendency of his speeches excited much discussion in high quarters, and alarmed his more cautious friends. In one of these speeches, delivered March 25, 1780, at the Town Hall, Chelmsford, he said :—

The end and object of all political society are the happiness and security of the whole ; the means are those regulations which have been found agreeable to the wisdom and experience of the people. The conduct of rulers may, indeed, be warped from this great end to low and illiberal selfishness, and mankind from ignorance or indolence may tolerate the abuse, but nothing can destroy the claim. The pride and folly

of individuals might as well pretend to engross the air, the light, and the warmth of heaven, as justly to confine all powers and privileges of government to that narrow circle which has, in most countries, monopolized them.

And further, he adds :—

Public abuses, gentlemen, never correct themselves ; on the contrary, for having once been tolerated, they become inveterate, and though no fairness of title, or antiquity of possession, was ever able to prevent a government from encroaching upon the privileges of its subjects, yet to have intermitted the claim for a single instant, is often made a reason against the people for refusing that claim for ever. For these reasons I must end as I began, by exhorting you to bend the whole weight of your attention to the reform of public abuses, and the renewal of the constitution. This can only be done by shortening the duration of parliament and by introducing a more equal representation. When these points have been obtained the nation will be enabled to exert all the wisdom, valour, and resolution it possesses in its own defence, and if we fail then, we deserve to fall for ever.

These, gentlemen, are, or ought to be, the end of your meetings and associations. They are the great ends to which you are called by every honest and independent man, who, solely intent upon his country's good, looks down with equal indifference, both on ministers and oppositions, who asks no favour, solicits no patronage, and, while he scorns alike to lend his aid to power or faction, devotes himself a willing victim to the public cause. Nor think that I am exhorting you to a dangerous, although to a difficult undertaking. I know there are times when the public evils are so desperate as to deter even honest men from attempting a cure ; but these times have not yet arrived ; and that they never may, I exhort you not to lose the present moment. Let

your petitions be expressed with a decent, but a manly boldness. Let your voices rise, not like the voices of a tumultuous rabble, a name with which you are always honoured by the sycophants of a court, who are raised upon the public spoils to insult the public calamities; but with the irresistible force of a well-disciplined army, that neither provokes nor fears hostilities. After a calm of the longest duration, the spirit of the people is at length excited, and I see a storm gathering which may be fatal to its enemies. It is yours, ye free and independent citizens! ye uncorrupted remains of a wise and valiant people, to direct this tide of national zeal to its proper object, not to suffer it to be diverted into a thousand scanty streams; but to roll it full against the loftiest bulwarks of oppression. They will not resist its rage; they will be levelled with the ground, and leave you an easy victory, attended with the sublimest honours which mortals can attain, that of being the *patres patriæ*, the saviours of your country and the restorers of public liberty.

In a speech to the freeholders of Cambridgeshire, on the *Reduction of Sinecures*, April 25, 1780, he made the following forcible remarks:—

From what I have said, it is evident that I consider all pretences to a reformation, which do not comprehend the restoration of the people to their rights, as calculated to amuse your hopes, but not to restore your liberties; and I look upon every party, whatever may be their pretences to public zeal, which will not boldly and publicly subscribe to the necessity of shortening the duration of parliament, and correcting the abuses of representation, as unworthy of your confidence. Be assured, the opposition of such men to government, is like the quarrel of certain sects against the Church of Rome, not for the sake of dispensing light and liberty to

mankind; but merely to appropriate infallibility to themselves. But, it is your business, if you are seriously interested in your own, or your country's fate, to shew that you are to be no more circumvented by fraud, than to be terrified by danger. It belongs to me and to every honest man that possesses sufficient boldness to hazard his ease, or safety, to warn you as assiduously against the secret-selfishness of pretended friends, as against the bolder machinations of open enemies; but it is your part to, prove by your discernment and resolution, that you deserve the sacrifices we make. If you will only be true to yourselves, you will have the proudest of the contending faction suing to you for your support. Without them, you may be great and free and happy, without you, the people, they are only unsubstantial shadows, glittering bubbles, and an empty name. Do not think that I here intend a general satire on either nobility or opposition; there are, I doubt not, many individuals in both, as much distinguished by their public spirit, as by their rank, and if they will now meet the people on fair and constitutional grounds, we will march contented under their ensign, we will not envy them, either their emoluments, or the distinctions of public office; and they shall be more firmly seated on our affections than ever they could be upon our fears. But if they wish to elude the honest wishes of the people, if they think to raise and still the waves of popular discontent, as suits their interest or caprice; if they would make us the mercenaries of faction instead of the volunteers of freedom, it is necessary to learn, that though we wish to be free with their assistance, we dare be free without them.

He concludes this, his last public speech, with these words:—

After having so boldly delivered my sentiments to others, it may be, perhaps, permitted me to say something of my-

self. The motives which have impelled me to the dangerous service I have this day chosen, are equally unmixed with interest or ambition; the uniform tenor of my former life, voluntarily devoted to leisure, study, and retirement; the independence of my fortune, and the contempt I have ever shewn for the pageantry of the world, ought to be a sufficient evidence of my sincerity. All that is farther in my power, is publicly to declare the resolution which I long have taken: that under no pretext whatever will I stoop to solicit favours from any party, or even to accept of wages from my country, and when I shall be convicted of attempting to evade these professions, I will submit, without appeal, to all the infamy I shall deserve. A man who acts upon principles like these can have nothing to hope, even from the amplest success, beyond the happiness of his country, and the consciousness of having discharged his duty; and this consciousness, whatever else be my fate, I trust I shall bear with me into retirement.

These speeches of DAY excited much interest in the home counties, and brought around him both friends and foes. He also received numerous letters requesting him to accept a seat in Parliament, with large promises of support. Among the foremost of these requisitionists, was his friend, Dr. JEBB, for whose general character, DAY entertained the warmest feelings of respect. To this gentleman, he replied, and as the letter contains a fair sketch of the author's sentiments, it is here inserted:—

Were I to proportion my thanks for the trouble you give yourself on my account to the value which the favour bears in the eyes of ambitious men, I should find no words sufficiently strong for the obligation. Were I only on the con-

trary to consider the sentiments it excites in my own mind, I should hardly thank you for the crown of thorns, which, in the true spirit of Christianity, you have so often endeavoured to weave for my head. But I will exactly do neither one nor the other. I will thank you with the sincerest gratitude for the continual marks of esteem you shew me, being entirely convinced that, in almost you alone, such services can be considered as the most genuine and unequivocal marks of esteem. On the other hand, I must take the liberty of impressing my real opinions and feelings upon the subject, which, however dissonant to general practice, may, perhaps, receive some confirmation and evidence from the uninterrupted tenor of my past life.

The great indifference I have hitherto felt for the common distinctions which so much engage the attention of mankind, seems to me a sentiment so entirely founded upon reason, and a just estimation of human things, that I think it unnecessary to make any apology for it here. Of whatever nature, however, it may be, it certainly increases upon me with increasing years, and time, which takes away from all our other passions, adds nothing either to my desire of riches or honours.

With this view of things, how is it possible that I should descend to the common meanness of the bought and buying tribes, or stoop to solicit the suffrages of the multitude, more than I have hitherto sought the patronage of the great. Whatever may be the common and flimsy pretensions of popular men, I believe that few entertain any doubt that their own interest or vanity, is in reality, the predominant principle of their exertions. It was not in the forum, amidst the tribe of begging, cringing, shuffling, intriguing candidates, but in their farms, and amidst their rural labours, that the Romans were obliged to seek for men, who were really animated with a holy zeal for their country's glory,

and capable of preferring her interest to their own. I neither pretend to the magnanimity nor the abilities of those illustrious men, whom we are more inclined to admire than to imitate; but I pretend to all their indifference to public fame, and to all their disinterestedness. Be assured, then, that these principles, which have always been so wrought up into the groundwork of my character, can never be separated without marring the little merit of the piece, and will always be obstacles to my entering the list of public competition.

* * * * *

I am, my dear Doctor JEBB,

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS DAY.

The little band of Reformers to which DAY had so enthusiastically attached himself, gradually relaxed their efforts in a cause which appeared all but hopeless. They fell off, one by one, like the leaves of autumn, and on the first failure of an application for an equal representation in Parliament, the society dissolved. DAY now determined to quit the world of politics and retire into solitude, and this resolution he embodied in the subjoined verses, which seem to be the last effort of his Muse:—

When faithless senates venally betray,
 When each degenerate noble is a slave,
 When Britain falls an unresisting prey,
 What part befits the generous and the brave?

In vain the task to rouse my country's ire,
 And imp once more the stork's dejected wings,
 To solitude indignant I retire,
 And leave the world to parasites and kings.

Not like the deer, when, wearied with the race,
Each leaf astonishes, each breeze appals;
But like the lion, when he turns the chase
Back on his hunters, and the valiant falls.

Then let untamed oppression rage aloof,
And rule o'er men who ask not to be freed,
To liberty I vow this humble roof,
And he that violates its shade—shall bleed.

CHAPTER VIII.

Anningsley—Descriptive Sketches—The Peasantry—Agricultural Pursuits—Social Reform—Domæstic Habits—Educational Views—Glimpses of Character.

IN the spring of 1781, Mr. and Mrs. DAY left the neighbourhood of Stapleford Abbots, chiefly owing to the humidity of the situation, and retired to Anningsley, an estate which he purchased, three miles southward of Chertsey, in Surrey. The house which DAY occupied was of the simplest and most unpretending kind. Since his time, it has been much improved by the late Hon. JAMES NORTON, a younger son of the first Lord GRANTLEY. It stands in the centre of a pleasant farm of some three hundred acres, surrounded by a circling wood about half a mile deep. When DAY purchased Anningsley it was a wilderness indeed. Some twenty thousand acres of waste land, belonging to the adjacent parishes of Chertsey, Chobham, and Woking, lay around in a wild and barren state, a large portion of which yet remains in the same hopeless condition; and strange as the fact may seem, within thirty miles of the metropolis of the world. Anningsley is embosomed in a valley, one mile east of Ottershaw, in the immediate vicinity of its old

Saxon village. One of DAY's friends, on visiting his new home, asked him how he came to choose such an out-of-the-way residence. He replied, "To exclude myself from the vanity, vice, and deceptive character of man."

Some time since, through the kindness of the Hon. Mrs. NORTON, I had the privilege of visiting Anningsley, and of exploring the retreat of DAY. On entering by an old lodge gate, almost hidden by trees and shrubs, I passed on through a dense wood, deep and shadowy, consisting of firs, pines and oaks. The general silence of the place was only broken by the gentle whisper of the summer breeze, and the melody of various birds. This dreamy half-mile walk under the over-arching trees, through which scarcely a bit of blue sky could be seen, opened on a finely cultivated farm; before me, in the distant hollow, was the house in which THOMAS DAY wrote the "History of Sandford and Merton." On my right, was a fine patch of wheat, golden in the sunshine; on my left, were several peasants toiling with apparently happy faces and contented hearts. I reached the house, walked in the garden paths, which were consecrated by the widow's tears after the death of her husband, gazed on the flower-fringed streamlet, and strolled in the beechen grove of their retirement. Mrs. S. C. HALL, who until recently resided at Firfield, near to Anningsley, has described the woods and house in her "Pilgrimages

to English Shrines," with singular fidelity. She says:—

What a delicious wood it is! wild and wandering, untrimmed and prodigal of its own peculiar beauty; such deep-toned red-brown stems to the lofty firs, whose dark green spines mat above our heads, where the summer breeze makes such reed-like music that we could fancy it the court of Pan himself. We hear the bleating of the lambs in the far-off meadows, and the soft tinkling of the sheep-bell; the whistle of the blackbird, the loud daring song of the missel-thrush, and the soft whispering "coo" of the little brown dove.

Of the house, she remarks, with equal justice:—

The house, we can hardly tell how, looks put away in a corner, though there is no corner to put it in; but it is exactly the sort of house we should have imagined Mr. DAY, in his eccentricity, would have desired. Something shy and mysterious, commodious and unpretending; peeping, rather than looking, at the wild solitary world beyond, and loving uncultivated, rather than cultivated nature, even at the time that his fine mind and benevolent heart were acting together for the good of present and future generations.

On coming to Anningsley, DAY found plenty of work for his mental and physical energies, and he laboured most zealously to turn his early dreams into beautiful realities. The peasants, who occupied the straggling thatched cottages which comprise the hamlet of Brocks, and beyond the Ford Mill, were poor, illiterate, and ill-clad. Their children were ragged and shoeless, little in advance of the brute creation, with no means of acquiring the commonest elementary education. Here, then, was

an open field for the exercise of his large-heartedness and benevolence. The land he had purchased was in as rude a condition as the unpolished natives themselves, hence he conceived the laudable idea of improving their social condition, by the encouragement of industrious habits, because he considered well-earned bread to be sweeter to a right-minded man than the mistaken bread of charity. He had strongly attached himself to agricultural pursuits, which he considered to be the most useful of all employments and most beneficial to the well-being of the general community. He regarded the peasantry with much interest, and studied to improve their habits of life, believing, with GOLDSMITH, that

A bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.

The working of his farm enabled DAY to employ all those who were willing to earn their bread by honest means, and his invariable custom was to employ through the winter months all those who had remained faithful to him during the summer season, and to give them one shilling a week more in the winter, "because," as he said, "these poor people want more comforts at this severe season of the year."

This conduct caused the neighbouring farmers to ridicule the *queer yeoman*, who retained men to do seemingly unnecessary work in wintry weather, rather than compel them to seek relief from the

parish. Some persons regarded him as a misanthropist, seeing that he lived apart from his aristocratic neighbours, kept neither carriage nor liveried servants, nor shared in the luxuries of the higher classes. One gentleman wrote him a long expostulatory letter, urging him to beware of the sin of avarice. His correspondent did not consider that that which DAY saved by his simple habits was used for the benefit of the poor. His benevolence flowed, like a sheltered stream, in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. His name was never seen on a long list of subscribers to a sounding charity; his acts resembled rather the silent operations of nature, where the bounteous hand of the Divine Giver is unseen.

The following letter to his friend, EDGEWORTH, in the summer of 1789, a few months before his death, will be read with interest. It relates to his favourite pursuits at his Surrey estate:—

Relative to the subject of farming, I should almost look upon your desire for information as a boast of superiority; for I think you must be sufficiently acquainted with the principle of it in England to know that gentlemen are much more likely to lose than to gain forty per cent. I will, however, give you the detail you desire, with all the precision possible.

In the first place, then, I am out of pocket every year about £300 by the farm keep. The soil I have taken in hand, I am convinced, is one of the most completely barren in England. The estate is certainly improved in value by what

I have done; but were it to be let, I do not imagine it would pay two per cent. for all that I have laid out; probably not above one. You may, perhaps, wonder I should persevere in such a losing trade; and, to avoid future explanation, I will give it you now. I am particularly pleased with the study of agriculture; and the constant business which so large a farm creates gives the most agreeable interest in the world. It gives me a continual object in going out; and the necessary trouble of governing so many men, and providing for so many animals, keeps my mind from stagnating in solitude. By these means I am enabled to live happily, with a perfect independence of my fellow creatures; for the succession of employments is such that my whole life is taken up, without fatigue or ennui.

Were I to give up farming, I should have less care, but I should also become more sedentary; and the very absence of that care, which now never rises to anything like uneasiness, would expose me infinitely more to hypochondriacism, which I am now totally free from. I have besides another very material reason, which is, that it enables me to employ the poor; and the result of all my speculations about humanity is, that the only way of benefitting mankind is to give them employment, and make them *earn* their money. Besides this, I have even a very substantial motive of interest: I do not want to practise the *obliquity* of great accumulations, but I now think that every wise man will rather improve his circumstances, as it is almost impossible not either to improve or to diminish. I take care to live within my income, and while I spend large sums in employing the poor, they are not entirely lost. I am continually improving the quality of my lands and the conveniences of my estate, buildings, planting, every kind of improvement I choose to pay for out of my income. I consider the pleasure of everything to lie in the pursuit, and therefore, while I am contented with the con-

conveniences I enjoy, it is a matter of indifference whether I am five or twenty years in completing my intended plans. This scheme also is connected with my own particular temper; for doing nothing with relation to the opinion of others, and everything from a thorough knowledge of my own tastes and feelings, I do nothing that does not permanently please me.

There is also another very ample source of future profit in the very large plantations I am continually making, and which in no very long space of time will probably more than double the value of my estate.

This letter continues in the same hopeful and descriptive strain. Miss EDGEWORTH justly remarks upon the letter from which the above sentiments are taken:—

Mr. DAY differs from many philosophers in one remarkable particular, in being more benevolent in practice than in theory.

In another of DAY's letters, these sentiments occur:—

Says Nature, 'Dig, plough, grub, fish, hunt, build, and you will be rewarded for your pains.' 'No,' say the French, the English, or some other refined people; we choose to be idle and sentimental.' 'Then starve,' says Nature, 'this is my eternal, immutable decision, of which neither plays, nor poetry, nor oratory, nor sentiment, will ever change one tittle.' What, then, is the lot of man, in every country? To labour, and eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. If from the inevitable variety of combination in every civilized society there are a certain number who are exceptions to the rule, Nature has nothing whatever to do with the subject, and it is equally indifferent to her ladyship which letter in the alphabet constitutes the dignified exception. What, then, is the proper

employment of benevolence below ? In my opinion, to rectify as far as we are able the evils which proceed from the unequal distribution of property, by relieving those, first, who are in absolute want of the necessities of life, and particularly those who want them without their own fault.

That Mr. EDGEWORTH destroyed so many of DAV's interesting letters after he had given up the idea of writing the life of his friend, is much to be regretted. They would have given the reader a deeper insight into his character and motives, and would have formed a beautiful apology for his eccentricities.

His old political companions were not disposed to leave him alone in his retirement. They frequently requested him to attend public meetings at Guildford and in other towns, but no request could induce him again to come forward. He had now resolved upon moral and social reform, to endeavour to teach the people self-help and self-respect, believing that all other reforms must inevitably follow.

A gentleman of high standing, officially connected with the Ministry, wrote him a letter, requesting him to accept a seat in Parliament, to whom he sent the following characteristic reply :—

SIR,—The honour you have done me, in addressing a letter to me, which I duly received, requires an answer, and at the same time I shall rely on your good sense in using a degree of freedom which otherwise might appear unpalatable to a gentleman in your position.

Mr. S., some days past, when I accidentally called upon

him, put into my hands a letter, which I had totally forgotten I had ever sent him, and asked me whether I had any objection to his shewing it to some of the gentlemen that were at present concerned in the administration of affairs, and acquainting them with the good wishes which I had frequently in conversation expressed towards them. I looked over the letter, and told him that I was not in the least ashamed of any of the sentiments contained in it, nor had I altered them, except in one particular. When I wrote that letter, I should not have refused a seat in Parliament, had I been disinterestedly invited by my countrymen; at present, no human temptation would make me leave the privacy and leisure I enjoy in the country. I also warned him of the peculiar delicacy which was required in representing to any gentleman in power the sentiments of a person who, having little to value himself but honesty and independence, felt an habitual jealousy upon every subject that was connected with them. I imagine that it was in consequence of those sentiments that I have been favoured with the letter I am now answering, and that there may be no mistake on either side, I shall take the liberty of stating my present political ideas, that you may judge how far they are capable of being converted to any practical use.

I have always detested the American War, which I foresaw must exhaust this country exactly in proportion to the time it was carried on. I therefore gave it every opposition which was in the power of so insignificant an individual as myself. Convinced, also, that the present mutilated state of Parliamentary representation was one cause of the public evils, which threaten to overwhelm the country, and may, in the last, occasion the total loss of its liberty, I have sincerely joined with those respectable gentlemen who, in different parts of England, have embraced the cause of Reformation, but without the most distant hope of success. I always considered the people

as being too supine, and the party who were interested to oppose it as being too powerful, to leave many hopes for any one who did not consider public affairs, rather through the medium of enthusiasm than that of sober reason.

When Lord SHELburne made the peace, I was convinced that, without any nice examination into its merits, it was the most salutary step which could be taken for the preservation of this country. I was, therefore, shocked at the cavils which were made against it by those very people who, I am convinced, would have abused him ten times more, had he discovered any intention of carrying on the war. But when that unparalleled scheme of a coalition was fairly exhibited, and the immense patronage of the East India Company struck at by those desperate political gamesters, who apparently wished to establish a power alike independent of King and people, I thought it my duty to oppose it with the same spirit that we assist to quench a flame which threatens common ruin to the neighbourhood.

With these ideas I own that I am and shall remain favourable to the present Ministry, till I shall be convinced by their conduct that it will be a less evil to the country to be under the dominion of the old set than to continue its present government.

I am not in general very partial to persons in power, but I cannot conceive why a set of men, who are already in possession of all their ambition can wish, may not as well consult the true interest of the country, as basely endeavour to destroy it. If Mr. PITT, actuated by these motives, wishes to put the almost exhausted resources of this country into some order, to make provision for the payment of public debts, and to ease the people of some of their burthens, which, if they are not taken off, will infallibly crush all commerce and industry; if he will endeavour, by steadily pursuing these objects, to merit the approbation of the virtuous, he will cer-

tainly meet with it, and it is their duty to assist him, each according to his ability.

As to the reform of Parliament, I think Mr. PITT has discharged his promise, and the very reasons which have provoked some of my brother Reformers, are with me the strongest motives for admitting his sincerity. To expect that the Minister of a great, and above all, a corrupted State, like this, should calmly and deliberately demolish the frame of government for the sake of making an experiment, is betraying a lamentable ignorance of human nature. I am not myself such a child as either to expect or wish that all government should stand still in such a wonderfully complicated system of society as our own, in order that two or three Reformers may try their skill in greasing the wheels.

But what I think may be fairly required of the present Ministry is, that they should pursue national objects by fair and honourable means; that if they are not devoid either of interest or ambition, these passions should be worked up with the public good, and not predominate in the piece, and that they should never be so entirely engrossed with the dirty ideas of preserving their places, as to sacrifice truth, consistency, public interest, and private integrity.

You, sir, must be the best judge of the ends and principles of the gentlemen with whom you act. If they are such as I have described, you may at any time command all the assistance that so unimportant an individual as myself can give; but you may depend upon it that I should become your most determined enemy, were I ever convinced that your designs were of a contrary nature.

As to myself, I am no more ashamed of supporting a good, than of opposing a bad government; but kinds of conduct must alternately flow from the same spirit, and in the like everything else, the best and wisest conduct is placed between the two extremes. One thing more I will take the liberty of

adding. However little you may conceive that any man can approach the treasury, either with pure hands or a pure heart, I cannot help endeavouring to make you believe in such a miracle, and, therefore, whether our correspondence should finish here, or be extended any further, I must, in the most unequivocal manner, abjure all views of profit, interest, or patronage, and give it under my own hand, that if I am ever detected in deviating from these principles, I consent to be called a fool, a rascal, and a hypocrite.

I have taken the liberty of giving you every explanation I am able of my views and sentiments. If the sample does not suit, you will owe me no apology for not giving yourself any further trouble upon my account; and be assured that I shall be as little inclined to become an enemy by want of notice, as I should be made a friend to any administration by any attentions they could shew. I am sufficiently acquainted with human things to desire nothing further than what I already enjoy. It is, therefore, I must ingenuously confess, with great reluctance, that I find myself even honoured in the manner I am at present; but if, consistently with the principles I have laid down, you think I can be of any use, I will waive the point of ceremony, and wait upon you when I come to town.

DAY received no further communication on political subjects, and was henceforth left unmolested amid the shades of Anningsley, where he passed the remainder of his life in peace. He was an early riser, often out in the fields at grey dawn. Being careful of time, his hours were divided between labour, recreation, and rest. After seeing to the business of his farm, he usually spent a portion of the day, except when he visited London, in

literary pursuits, reading, and study, principally with a view of promoting a wider system of education, which should at once strengthen the body and pleasantly inform the mind. "It was to be able to do good to others" says a writer in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' as well as to gratify the ardent curiosity of his own mind, that he became an ingenious mechanic, a well-informed chemist, a theoretical physician, and an expert constitutional lawyer. Youth, he thought, should be inspired with a hardy spirit, both of ~~passive~~ and active virtue, and led to form such habits of industry and fortitude, as would produce a manly independence of character, and a mind superior to the enticements of luxuriant indulgence. With this view, he wrote the 'History of Sandford and Merton.'"

This genuine story book was the result of his literary studies at Anningsley, and it contains many autobiographical glimpses of its author. Here is a truthful sketch, which he puts into the mouth of the virtuous *Chares*, on relinquishing his travels, and which strictly accords with his own life and habits at this period:—

I returned to my native city determined to pass the rest of my life in obscurity and retirement, for the result of all my observation was, that he is happiest who passes his time in innocent employments and the observation of nature. I had seen the princes and nobles of the earth repining in the midst of their splendid enjoyments, disgusted with the

empty pageantry of their situation, and wishing in vain for the humble tranquillity of private life. I had visited many of the principal cities in several countries where I had travelled, but I had uniformly observed that the miseries and crimes of mankind increased with their numbers. I, therefore, determined to avoid the general contagion, by fixing my abode in some sequestered spot, at a distance from the passions and pursuits of my fellow-creatures. Having, therefore, collected the remainder of my effects, I purchased a little farm. I soon afterwards married a virtuous young woman, and in her society enjoyed for several years as great a degree of happiness as generally falls to the lot of man. I did not disdain to exercise with my own hands the different implements of agriculture, for I thought man was dishonoured by that indolence which renders him a burthen to his fellow-creatures, not by that industry which is necessary to the support of his species. I, therefore, sometimes guided the plough, sometimes laboured in a little garden which supplied us with excellent fruits and herbs. Amidst my other employments, I did not entirely forget the study of philosophy, which had charmed me so much in my early youth. I frequently observed with admiration, the wisdom and contrivance which were displayed in all the productions of nature, and the perfection of all her works. I used to walk amid the coolness and stillness of the evening, feeding my mind with pleasing meditations upon the power and wisdom which have originally produced and still support this frame of things. I turned my eyes upon the earth and saw it covered with innumerable animals that sported upon its surface, and found, each according to his nature, subsistence adapted to his wants. I saw the air and water themselves teeming with life and peopled with innumerable swarms of insects. I saw that throughout the whole extent of creation, as far as I was capable of observing it, nothing was waste or

desolate ; everything was replete with life, and adapted to support it. These reflections continually excited in my mind, new gratitude and veneration for that mysterious Being whose goodness presides over such an infinite variety of beings. I endeavoured to elevate my thoughts to contemplate his nature and qualities. I, however, found my faculties too bounded to comprehend the infinite perfection of His nature. I, therefore, contented myself with imperfectly tracing him in his works, and adoring him as the common friend and parent of all his creatures. Nor did I confine myself to these speculations, however sublime and consolatory to the human heart. Destined as we are to inhabit this globe of earth, it is our interest to become acquainted with its nature and the properties of its productions. For this reason, I particularly examined all the vegetables which are capable of becoming the food of man, or of the various animals which contribute to his support. I studied their qualities, the soil in which they delighted, and the improvements which might be made in every species. Amid these tranquil and innocent employments, my life flowed gently away, like a clear and even stream.

CHAPTER IX.

Rustic Labours—Samuel Cobbett—Physical Improvements—Sundays at Anningsley—"Sandford and Merton"—A Journey to Bear Hill—Day's Death—The Widow's Tears—Epitaph—Pye's Poetic Tribute—Estimates of Day—Conclusion.

THE inner life of DAY at Anningsley forms the fairest picture in his biography. He had found a genial retreat where he could "live at a distance from men, and yet near enough to do them good." The clay-built cottages which comprise the sequestered hamlet of Brocks, were tenanted by illiterate, uncared-for families. There was no house of prayer within three miles of this locality, which contained some two hundred souls. The country around was comparatively desolate, a few gentlemen's seats peeped here and there amid woodland and waste, a few decent farm-houses were scattered thinly up and down the uneven landscape. The streams of divine love and charity, seldom reached their remote ears. There was and still is, a rustic tavern hard by, known as the *Otter*, thus named probably from its nearness to Ottershaw, which may have helped to render peasant-homes yet more unhappy. DAY looked upon those forlorn cottages, those weed-buried gardens, and those bare-footed

children with feelings of tenderness, and the rich heart of his amiable partner beat in unison with her husband's for the social and religious elevation of these neglected people. They immediately began to devise means for the alleviation of rural distress and the enlightenment of the rural mind. DAY's rude land required both men and cattle, and he offered every industriously-disposed peasant in the neighbourhood employment, while, Mrs. DAY engaged their wives and daughters in knitting stockings, and in making other useful articles of apparel, for which she liberally paid and preserved for the more helpless and afflicted among them. DAY's knowledge of medicine and the laws of nature enabled him to minister to their physical necessities, but he soon found that with well-ventilated houses, temperate habits, industry, pure air and exercise, very little medicine was required. Mrs. DAY was, also, indefatigable in her exertions on behalf of those who were ill, for her chief happiness consisted in striving to make others happy. The farmers, among whom a great amount of ignorance prevailed, few could even write their own name, were generally unfavourable to the labours of DAY. They could not appreciate his plans, because they could not understand his motives. There was, however, one honourable exception in the person of SAMUEL COBBETT, the then proprietor of Fowler's Well Farm, a pleasant homestead, near to the retired

village of Chobham. COBBETT was an extremely well-informed man for his time. His farm and beautiful flower-garden were alike, pictures of taste, and very naturally attracted the attention of DAY. They soon became intimate friends. COBBETT was one of the best practical farmers in that part of Surrey, and his advice, based on long experience, was of great advantage to DAY in his agricultural pursuits, whilst his knowledge of literature, and the world generally, combined with an amiable disposition, made him an agreeable companion.

An improvement, both moral and physical, was soon visible around the young woods of Anningsley. Youth and age were the constant objects of DAY's paternal care. Where the nightshade and nettle grew in rank luxuriance, green corn waved in the summer sunshine, and it must have been a genial sight to see those peasant-children on Sunday mornings, cleaned and shod, trotting through the groves of Anningsley, to receive religious instruction from Mrs. DAY, and to see parents travelling thither, also, for similar benefits, for on wet Sundays especially, when adults were prevented attending Divine Service at the picturesque church of Horsell, which stands on a green eminence among clustering elms and oaks, some three miles off, DAY would invite them to his house, would pray with them and his domestics, and read and expound portions of Scripture in his kindest manner. He

exhorted them to habits of temperance, industry, and cleanliness, according to the excellent morality of the New Testament. On viewing this side of DAY's portrait, all his former eccentricities and pretended stoicism pass into the shade, and he stands forth in the light and life of Christianity. Through how many channels his human love reached the sinking hearts of the oppressed and poor, we know not, and may never know; but he had his reward in the heavenly serenity of a mind exalted above the trifling perturbations of the world. A large share of inner happiness made his way lustrous and cheerful; a healthy and even temperament, grew out of a natural and obedient life. He laboured in the brightness of a divine faith, which outshone the shadows of his early years, yet, at intervals, when he passed from the tranquillity of his embosomed home into the busy thoroughfares of the great world beyond, and thought of its sins and its sorrows, his large heart grieved over the vast amount of human suffering which he could not alleviate.

His time was now fully occupied in cultivating his farm and garden, in occasional visits to his mother at Bear Hill, who was again a widow, and for whom he entertained the warmest affection; in visiting a few literary friends in London, two or three times in the course of the year, and in completing his long-planned book, the "History of

Sandford and Merton," which book, however, he did not live to carry out to the length he originally intended, although it is complete as far as it goes. The work was suggested by his connexion with the EDGEWORTHS, and was at first designed as a short companion story to EDGEWORTH'S "Harry and Lucy." The skeleton lay by him untouched for several years, but when he separated himself from politics and public life, he devoted his leisure to the completion of the book, the first part of which appeared in 1783, the second in 1786, and the third in 1789, and the first complete edition forms three volumes. Few books have had a larger share of public favour, during such a number of years. "Robinson Crusoe," and "Sandford and Merton," have had an unparalleled number of young friends, and will long continue to illumine the sunny paths of childhood.

It may not be out of order to introduce here a few of DAY'S thoughts; which will assist the reader towards a just estimate of their author's character. Speaking of a flock of larks in a turnip field, he says:—

These little fellows are trespassing upon my turnips in such numbers, that in a short time they will destroy every bit of green about the field; yet I would not hurt them on any account. Look round the whole extent of the country, you will see nothing but a barren waste, which presents no food either to bird or beast; these little creatures, therefore, assemble in multitudes here, where they find a scanty subsis-

tence, and, though they do me some mischief, they are welcome to what they can find. In the spring they will enliven our walks by their agreeable songs.

Custom reconciles people to every kind of life, and makes them equally satisfied with the place in which they were born.

Many of our rich men at home imagine that they have nothing to do with their fortune but to throw it away upon their pleasures, while there are so many thousands in want of the common necessities of life.

How hard is the lot of the poor when they are afflicted with sickness! How intolerable do *we* find the least bodily disorder, even though we possess every convenience that can mitigate its violence! Not all the dainties which can be collected from all the elements, the warmth of downy beds and silken couches, the attendance of obsequious dependents, are capable of making us bear with common patience the most common disease; how pitiable then must be the state of a fellow-creature who is at once tortured by bodily suffering, and destitute of every circumstance that can alleviate it; who sees around him a family that are not only incapable of assisting their parents, but destined to want the common necessities of life, the moment he intermits his daily labours. How indispensable then is the obligation which should continually impel the rich to exert themselves in assisting their fellow-creatures, and rendering that condition of life which we all avoid, less dreadful to those who must support it always.

There cannot be so much difference between one human being and another; or if there is, I should think that part of them the most valuable, who cultivate the ground, and provide necessities for all the rest.

Do we not see, even in the most trifling habits of body or speech, that a long and continual attention is required, if we wish to change them; and yet our perseverance is in the end, generally successful. Why, then, should we imagine that those of the mind are less obstinate, or subject to different laws? Or, why should we rashly abandon ourselves to despair, from the first experiments that do not succeed according to our wishes?

The greater part of all bad conduct springs rather from want of firmness, than from any settled propensity to evil.

To be armed against the prejudices of the world, and to distinguish real merit from the splendid vices which pass current in what is called society, is one of the most difficult of human sciences, nor do I know a single character however excellent, that would not candidly confess he has often made a wrong election, and paid that homage to a brilliant outside, which is only due to real merit.

Few know all they are capable of; the seeds of different qualities frequently lie concealed in the character, and only wait for an opportunity of exerting themselves; and it is the great business of education to apply such motives to the imagination, as may stimulate it to laudable exertions, for thus the same activity of mind, the same impetuosity of temper, which, by being improperly applied, would only form a wild, ungovernable character, may produce the steadiest virtues, and prove a blessing both to the individual and his country.

If women are in general feeble both in body and mind, it arises less from nature, than from education; we encourage a vicious indolence and inactivity, which we falsely call delicacy, instead of hardening their minds by the severer

principles of reason and philosophy, we breed them to useless arts, which terminate in vanity and sensuality. We seem to forget, that it is upon the qualities of the female sex, that our own domestic comforts, and the education of our children, must depend.

There are some philosophers who aspire to triumph over human feelings, and consider all tender affections as disgraceful weaknesses ; for my part, I have never pretended to that degree of insensibility. I have, indeed, opposed as criminal, that habitual acquiescence in sorrow, which renders us unfit for the discharge of our duties ; but while I have endeavoured to act, I have never blushed at feeling like a man.

The poor, accustomed to hardship, have little to fear amid the vicissitudes of life ; the brave can always find a refuge in their own valour ; but all the bitterness of existence is reserved for those who have neither courage to defend what they most value, nor fortitude to bear the loss.

The last part of "Sandford and Merton" had but just issued from the press when its author's eminently useful life was suddenly brought to a close. It was on a bright morning in early autumn, September 28, 1789, that DAY left Anningsley with the view of visiting his wife and mother at Bear Hill. He held such a high opinion of the gratitude of animals, that he thought nothing more than kind treatment was necessary to bend the most savage of the brute creation. He, therefore, ventured on a favourite, unbroken colt, unaccustomed to the bit and bridle, and as he was musingly passing a farm-yard, a short distance from the village

of Wargrave, a labourer appeared in a gateway, bearing a corn-screen on his shoulder, at sight of which, the young horse shied, dashed across the road, which was hard and stony, and threw DAY to a considerable distance. By this fall, his brain suffered such a severe concussion that he spoke no more, and died in a neighbouring cottage, within an hour of the accident, and before medical aid could be procured. His wife and mother, hearing of the catastrophe, hurried to the spot, but his spirit had already passed to the morning land. The author of "Sandford and Merton" was *dead*.

This unexpected event so affected the mind of his amiable wife that, immediately after the funeral, which took place at Wargrave, she returned to Anningsley, retired to her solitary chamber to weep alone. Life seemed to possess no charms for her apart from the beloved one. She resolved to devote her remaining years to benevolence and solitude. She was inconsolable, and would not even walk in the light of the sun—the night and the stars were more congenial to her sorrows, she mingled her tears with the dew of the twilight and her prayers went upward on the soft night breeze. She survived him two years, and died it was said, of a "broken heart."

They sleep side by side in the shadow of the quiet church of Wargrave, amid the scenes of his youthful years. The following epitaph which he

composed for his early friend, Dr. SMALL, may yet be read over his resting-place :—

Beyond the reach of time, or fortune's power,
Remain, cold stone, remain, and mark the hour,
When all the noblest gifts which heaven e'er gave,
Were centred in a dark, untimely grave!
Oh ! taught on Reason's boldest wings to rise
And catch each glimmering of the open skies !
Oh, gentle bosom ! oh, unsullied mind !
Oh, friend of truth, to virtue, to mankind !
Thy dear remains, we trust to this sad shrine,
Secure to feel no second loss like thine.

Several poetical tributes to the memory and virtues of DAY appeared in various publications. Among these the subjoined from the pen of the Poet Laureate, PKE, is, perhaps, the best :—

If pensive genius ever pour'd the tear
Of votive anguish o'er the poet's bier ;
If drooping Britain ever knew to mourn
In silent sorrow o'er the patriot's urn,
Here let them weep their DAY's untimely doom,
And hang the fairest garlands o'er his tomb ;
For never poet's hand did yet consign
So pure a wreath to Virtue's holy shrine ;
For never patriot tried before to raise
His country's welfare on so firm a base ;
Glory's bright form he taught her youth to see,
And bade them merit freedom—to be free ;
No sculptur'd marble need his worth proclaim,
No herald's sounding style record his name ;
For long as sense and virtue fame can give,
In his own works his deathless fame shall live.

Dr. JAMES KEIR, who for a period of twenty years was on terms of uninterrupted friendship with DAY, thus sketches his person and character :—

In person, he was tall, strong, earnest and of a manly deportment, the expression of his countenance, though somewhat obscured by marks of the small-pox, indicated the two leading features of his character, firmness and sensibility. His voice was clear, expressive, and fit for public elocution. He could be no physiognomist who did not at once perceive that Mr. DAY was not an ordinary character. Perfectly simple in his manners, he practiced none of those artificial representations of excellence, which, however well imitated, being only masks, will fall in some unguarded moment. He never shewed the least inclination to be more or less wise, good, or learned, than he really was. On the nearest view, no carefully concealed weakness or disguised selfishness, was ever unveiled, so that the more intimately he was known, the more consistent his character appeared. The inviolable chain of principles which regulated his conduct, was more developed, and he was not only the more esteemed and loved, but, what is rare and contrary to a general rule, the more, also, he was admired. Such is the force of genuine unassumed worth, which, like the works of nature, discloses more excellence as it is more accurately inspected. In conversation he was unaffected and instructive, and although the habits of his mind generally turned it to objects of importance, yet he seldom failed to mix with his arguments much wit and pleasantry, of which he possessed an abundant vein. Where, however, his principles were attacked, he entered into the subject more deeply and fully than is agreeable to the fashionable tone of conversation, which skims lightly over the surface of all subjects, and penetrates to the bottom of none. Accordingly, mixed companies, such as that of busy and gay life must be, could not be much to his taste. Conversation in which no sentiment

is delivered with freedom, or expressed with force, lest it should happen to press upon the character of some person present, could not accord with the sincerity of his manners; but the more he confined his society within the compass of his friends, the stronger were his attachments to them. Of these attachments, his relations as a son, and as a husband, being the closest, were consequently the most conspicuous, as on all occasions he regulated his conduct by the strictest regard to duty. This principle could not fail in these more important instances to produce its full effect, but here its operation was superseded by the strength of his affection. He let no opportunity pass of proving his filial piety in the one case, or of cementing the union of hearts in the other.

His most intimate friend, Mr. EDGEWORTH, writes :—

It is but justice and not the partiality of friendship, that induces me to assert, that DAY was the most virtuous human being whom I have ever known. During three-and-twenty years that we lived in the most perfect intimacy, I never knew him swerve from the strictest morality in words or actions. How far beyond the rigid line of duty, his humanity, universal benevolence, and unbounded generosity carried him in his intercourse with mankind, even the unreserved friendship in which he lived with me or with any other of his friends, could never enable us to estimate.

The melancholy news of his death drew forth many tears around Anningsley. Poor hearts wept for the man who had lived within the strictest bounds of economy that he might behave more liberally to others, who enjoyed no expensive luxuries while the neighbouring peasants were in want of employment and bread, and who may tell, save

the recording angel, what noiseless blessings flowed out upon the great world of want and suffering, from the narrow doorway of that tree-shaded home. He passed away in the meridian of life, at the age of forty-one, but a long life is not absolutely necessary for the development of mind and character. Those individuals who work best in the world, are not always the long-lived, but it matters not,—

He most lives,

Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

and surely, to use the lines of my friend, JOHN BEDFORD LENO,—

It is not an idle fancy, that the best are called away,
While the wicked and the worthless make on earth the longest
stay.

* * * * *

Earth cannot know perfection for we cannot bind it here,
It is subtler far than ether, it is lighter far than air,
I have marked the meek-eyed violet, in the deep sequestered
dell,

And the pure and spotless lily by the silver-footed rill,
And I've ever heard the angels, crying "Come and dwell on
high,"

And their beauty rose on perfumed wings to greet them in
the sky,

Till naught was left but faded leaves and petals sickly pale,
That crept into earth's bosom at the bidding of the gale.

DAY lived in a corrupt age, and passed through life, untainted by surrounding vices. His nature was essentially benevolent, humble, and hopeful. He was ever the same consistent lover of those principles of truth and justice, uninfluenced by sect,

or party, to which he attached himself in his youth. He was not permitted to develope his golden-hued dreams to their fullest extent, but his brief life was a triumph of virtue and goodness, characterised by an active spirit, which impelled him to exercise his wealth and talents, with a noble ardour, in endeavouring to make the world more heavenly, and man more God-like.

FINIS.

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